University of Alberta

A Humean Naturalistic Moral Theory

By

Augustine Yaw Frimpong-Mansoh

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Philosophy

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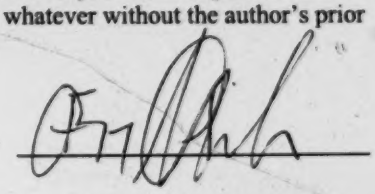

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Dedication

To My Parents
(Mr. Kojo Frimpong & Mrs. Akosua Manu)

Abstract

This thesis is a Humean dialogue with David Hume on his influential ideas that are of contemporary philosophical influence and importance, in particular his ideas on the relation between morality and science. It interprets Hume's view of science in terms of his theory of causation and examines the connection that his causal theory of scientific explanation bears with his moral theory. The connection that Hume's causal theory bears with his moral theory has not been sufficiently appreciated and given a serious attention. This thesis defends the connection and argues that Hume's naturalism about morality defends continuity between moral inquiries and scientific investigations in terms of their explanatory functions. Hume defended a moral science to ground moral explanations and judgments in scientific foundation. Naturalism (especially the cognitivist kind) is often confused with realism. Rejecting recent interpretation of Hume as a "naturalistic realist," I argue that Hume saw moral truths as not validated by mind-independent moral facts, as realist claim. Instead, in the Humean account, we induce moral truths from values that we project onto the world by collective agreement. This idea is supported by Hume's convention theory of collective agreement. Hume's causal theory of moral behavior raises many puzzles. It seems that his naturalistic theory cannot say anything coherent about free human agency and judgments of moral responsibility. His theory also raises issues about moral luck. The thesis discusses the problems and many more, such as the place of normativity in Hume's naturalism about morality. My Humean dialogue with Hume is an effort to reconstruct his ideas in a clearer and systematic fashion in response to new insights and challenges raised by our contemporary philosophical and scientific developments. My objective is not to respond to Hume's arguments as repositories of dead historical ideas to be criticized and dismissed. Rather, I engage in a dialogue with the rich ideas of Hume as a sympathetic and questioning reader to reawaken them into a new life by rearguing them in sustained and systematic ways that make the best out of them, and examine what can be learned from them.

Preface

This work is a thesis of a "Humean" dialogue with Hume. The philosophical thoughts of the 18th-century scholar, David Hume, provide a number of important and influential ideas and arguments in moral philosophy that have become a large part of the intellectual baggage of contemporary philosophical discussions. I will call Hume's influential ideas and arguments that I discuss in this work as "Humean". Some of my Humean claims are not exactly Hume's, though they are Hume's in spirit. My Humean approach is an effort to reconstruct, reargue and reshape some of Hume's basic ideas and arguments in a clearer and systematic fashion in response to new insights and challenges raised by our contemporary philosophical and scientific developments. It aims at continuing and sustaining Hume's philosophical tradition in an innovative way by gathering together some of his basic ideas scattered in many places of his works, alter and revise them in a more satisfactory and coherent manner. My objective is to respond to the historical ideas of Hume not as repositories of intellectual resources "closed and dead" to be criticized and dismissed. Rather, I engage in a dialogue with the rich ideas of Hume as a sympathetic and questioning reader to reawaken them into a new life by examining what can be learned from them. The high volume of references to Hume's texts is an evidence of the credibility of the ideas and arguments that I draw from, as well as attribute to, him.

I will concentrate on the strands of Hume's ideas that are alive today and continue to be of influence and interest. A particular strand of his influential ideas that I conceive as of a prominent influence is his "naturalism" about morality. This is what engages my attention in my Humean dialogue with Hume in this work. The thesis discusses Hume's ideas on the perennial issue regarding the relation between morality and science. In particular, the issues about naturalism discussed in this work are raised by Hume's belief in continuity between morality and science, in terms of their explanatory functions. Hume is best known (by his sympathizers as well as his critics) for his causal theory of scientific explanation. As Barry Stroud writes: "There is scarcely anything of importance in the history of philosophy that is more familiar to us and more widely believed to be well understood than Hume's view of causality" (1995: 462). But the connection that Hume's causal theory bears with his moral theory has not been sufficiently appreciated. The connection that I see between the two underscores my interpretation of Hume's naturalism about morality to consist in a defense of continuity between moral inquiries and scientific investigations. Hume's general interest in causal explanations occupies a prominent

place in his moral theory. As his philosophical interest was dominated by an interest in empirical means of explaining the causal behavior of natural phenomena, Hume was also fundamentally interested in the scientific means of explaining the causal behavior of human nature. He defended a moral science to ground morality in scientific foundation. His naturalism about morality is rooted in his belief that human beings and their moral conduct are part of the causal order of nature. We live and conduct our moral practices in the natural world. Being part of the natural order, Hume believed that human nature and its manifestations in moral actions are causally explainable, as are other natural phenomena. Hume's scientific account of moral behavior influenced his belief in compatibility between causal determinism and free human agency, and particularly his views on judgments of moral responsibility. We see the argument particularly in his discussions of liberty and necessity, both in the *Treatise* and the *Enquiry*. Hume was deeply concerned with how to explicate what causes human beings to behave as they do. He studied the mind to describe its causal motivating influence on moral behavior and actions. He believed that facts about the mental states of moral agents provide the scientific bases of determining the moral responsibility of a person. He believed that actions are merely signs of a character or state of mind, and that a legitimate judgment of the moral responsibility of a person requires scientific facts about her character or mental dispositions that explain why she constantly behaves or has a tendency to act in a particular way.

The Humean causal theory of moral behavior raises many puzzles; the theory may be attacked from various fronts. First, it may be asked: Is there a uniformity in the human realm, as in the rest of the natural order, that provides a reliable basis of discovering general laws of morality on the model of the general laws of the sciences to explain and predict moral behavior? What would be the nature of such explanatory general laws of moral behavior? Chapter two discusses and provides a Humean response to the problem. It argues that Hume was unclear about the general character of the uniformity law that he copied from the sciences to defend the continuity thesis upon which his moral science is founded. The problem is an issue of how we define general laws. I argue that Hume did not need to defend strict parity between morality and science, in terms of the generality of their explanatory laws. Hume only needed to show their relative explanatory efficacy, relative that is to their respective fields of study. On the second front, Hume's naturalistic theory may be rejected on the ground that its descriptive framework undercuts normative demands of moral claims. I respond to the problem in chapter three. I defend the view that Hume's naturalistic theory non-paradoxically bridges the apparent gap between explanatory and justification requirements of morality. His naturalistic theory believes that normative questions regarding how we *ought* to act and live are answerable by descriptive or

causal (scientific) accounts of how we *do* act and live. Causal explanations are answers to normative questions regarding reasons for moral actions. On a third challenge, Hume's naturalistic theory may be criticized as posing a serious threat to fundamental moral issues, such as moral agency and responsibility. It may be argued that Hume's consideration of moral behaviour as causally determined, as natural events are, leaves no room for moral culpability. If moral actors are causally determined by the regularity law of nature, then it seems that we cannot hold moral agents responsible because their actions should be seen as caused by external forces over which they had no control. The issue raises a further problem about "moral luck", the idea that moral character and moral circumstances in which we act are subject to fate. I provide a Humean discussion of the problem in chapters four and five.

On another front, Hume's naturalism maintains that we discover general laws of moral behavior by studying facts about human nature (especially their psychological dispositions). This interpretation challenges the view that Hume, in his fact-value remarks, conceived of moral judgments as pure normative claims that cannot be premised on factual matters. Chapter six provides a Humean and new response to the problem; I discuss the issue in the context of a debate between realism and anti-realism. I argue that Hume's argument in his fact-value remarks involved a rejection of "rationalistic realists'" conception of moral facts. The discussion also rejects the connection that some recent Hume scholars, in their interpretation of Hume, draw between naturalism and moral realism. My Humean naturalistic accounts draw a distinction between naturalism and realism, a distinction that is generally taken for granted in recent debates on naturalism. A naturalist may conceive the reality of the world and its contents as something that exists objectively out there and yet resist realists' belief that the ontology of the world is mind-independent. On the Humean naturalism that I defend, the objective reality of moral values and institutions exists out there in the intersubjective public world by communal or collective agreement. Chapter seven develops a Humean "convention" theory of collective agreement to defend morality as a social institution that exists in the intersubjective public world by human construction. On this Humean view, moral institutions emerge conventionally from a communal agreement to adopt general rules to enforce regularity of cooperative moral behavior for common interests.

The following are some challenges as well as limitations of the work contained in this thesis. Many of my arguments and interpretations are controversial and provocative, and may therefore be received with a challenge. For, they depart in many radical ways from some respected interpretations by eminent scholars of Hume. I have no apology for this. The primary focus and contribution of the project is an effort to prompt and provoke a new and critical

thinking about many of our unquestioned received views and understanding of Hume; Hume is more often prejudged and prematurely dismissed than critically read. Another *prima facie* limitation of the thesis is that some pertinent issues in recent debates on naturalism that are also central in Hume scholarship are not explicitly discussed. Among these include the relation between the subjective naturalism that I discuss in chapter six and moral relativism: Are the meanings and judgments of vice and virtue culture-relative or do they apply universally? Did Hume believe in cross-cultural or universal general principles of morality? This work does not answer these questions, at least not directly. Another issue that is not discussed in this work concerns the naturalistic question whether moral facts and natural scientific facts are connected by "supervenience" relation: Are moral facts scientific in virtue of supervening on natural scientific facts, and what exactly is meant by the notion of "supervenience"? Since the current thesis is the beginning of an ongoing research project, these problems and many others will be revisited in the future.

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Chapter 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION: HUME'S NATURALISTIC MORAL THEORY

This introductory chapter describes the "Humean" theory of ethical "naturalism" that I examine in the thesis project. The discussion is a general outline of the specific "naturalistic" features that I find particularly interesting in Hume's moral thought. Subsequently, specific details and defense of many of my general remarks will be seen in the subsequent chapters.

My Humean theory of ethical naturalism examines and reconstructs Hume's "naturalistic" approach to moral theory. The thesis understands Hume's naturalism about morality to consist in a defense of "continuity" between moral inquiries and "scientific" investigations. I use the expression "continuity" non-technically to refer to the idea that Hume was committed to an interdisciplinary view that takes scientific and moral inquiries as not relevantly different in their "explanatory" functions. Hume defended a "moral science" by trying to show that we describe moral behavior and experience by the same explanatory procedure as the other sciences, such as physics and psychology. I will call this interdisciplinary view Hume's "continuity thesis." By defending the continuity thesis, Hume naturalized morality on the model of the empirical sciences, in particular, as a *causal explanatory theory* of moral behavior. Reflecting on this basic feature, David Wiggins identifies Hume's naturalism in ethics as "explanatory naturalism."[1] In a fundamental way, Hume conceived moral inquiries as yielding descriptive accounts of the "principles" that explain what causes moral agents to behave as they do. He therefore saw moral inquires as explanatory in nature. Thus, Hume's naturalistic approach to ethics is explanatory in nature. So, Wiggins is right that Hume's naturalistic moral theory may be identified as "explanatory naturalism." As we shall see, Barry Stroud (1977) also identifies Hume's naturalism by it explanatory character.[2]

I call my account Humean because I attempt to examine and reconstruct Hume's naturalistic theory of morality in a coherent way in response to some puzzles about his theory. My Humean account is committed to Hume in spirit, so to speak; it assembles passages from his writings, clarifies and organizes them as a systematic argument to defend, strengthen and salvage Hume's naturalistic moral theory. I have provided at the end of this introductory chapter an outline of the puzzles that I examine and discuss in the various chapters. Two main general issues are the primary focus of this introductory chapter. The first part of the discussion examines key

passages to bolster my identification of Hume's naturalism as built upon his continuity thesis. The second section calls to attention Hume's conception of moral theory as causal explanatory theory of human behavior. We shall see the view that Hume in his moral theory was concerned with the study of the mind to understand the principles that causally determine (motivate) and thus explain the behaviour and conduct of moral agents.[3]

1.1. HUME'S CONTINUITY THESIS

David Hume developed a moral system modeled on the scientific procedure of the empirical sciences.[4] The full title of his masterpiece on moral theory reads as follows: "*A Treatise of Human Nature: Being An Attempt to introduce the experimental Method of Reasoning into Moral Subjects.*"[5] Considered in isolation, what Hume implied by his title is obscure. In attempting to *introduce* experimental method into reasoning about moral matters, what exact relationship did he conceive between moral theory and scientific or "experimental" (empirical) theory? What specific "experimental" method did he think moral theories share with experimental or scientific theories?[6] These questions are few of the puzzles that we encounter if we take Hume's remark seriously as an announcement of the task that really engaged him in his moral philosophy. On the other hand, one may simply dismiss Hume's declaration as a rhetorical remark that need not be taken seriously. On this view, the remark is not a true characterization of the task that Hume actually pursued.

On closer attention to the particular character of Hume's moral thought, the second interpretation can be dismissed. The issue concerning the scientific bases of moral judgments, including the scientific means of describing moral behaviour occupied a central place in Hume's intellectual thought.[7] I agree with Barry Stroud (1977) that the full title of the *Treatise* "gives an excellent indication of what is to be found in the book, and in Hume's work generally."[8] Stroud argues: "Hume's remarks about following the experimental method are to be taken seriously, and should be kept in mind when examining the procedure he himself follows in his examination of human nature."[9] Stroud argues persuasively that Hume's moral theory "represents, for most people, the very paradigm of what it is to have an explanation of something, and therefore in particular what it is to understand human behavior."[10] Again, I share with Stroud the view that "Hume's theory sees every aspect of human life as naturalistically explicable."[11] Hume described moral inquires as an explanatory discourse that treats human beings and their ethical behavior as belonging to the scientifically intelligible world of nature. He placed human behavior and experiences in the empirical realm and described the general laws by which we explicate them scientifically in the same way that he believed the natural sciences induce laws from the regular

order of nature to explicate the behavior of natural phenomena. The title of the *Treatise* reflects his naturalistic belief that moral and scientific inquiries differ only in terms of their subject matter or objects of their investigations. By the title, Hume introduced the work as an attempt to model the method of moral reasoning on the pattern of the scientific procedure of the natural sciences. This task was motivated by the continuity that he saw between moral inquiries and scientific investigations in terms of their reasoning procedures. As he argued, "when we consider how aptly *natural* and *moral* evidence link together, and form only one chain of argument, we shall make no scruple to allow that they are of the same nature, and derive from the same principles" (E. 90).

Hume's description of moral inquiries as a scientific enterprise was consistent with a widespread belief in his generation, the view that "any defensible moral philosophy, including any acceptable account of moral obligation must be consistent with modern science, if not itself scientific."[12] In Hume's generation, the success of experimental science excited a debate about the scientific bases of moral judgments. Hume formulated the debate as follows: "The controversy, which of late years has so much excited the curiosity of the public [involves the issue] *whether these moral distinctions be founded in natural and original principles, or arise from interest and education.*"[13] The controversy involved an issue about the scientific basis of drawing moral distinctions, for example, the distinction between vice and virtue. Hume's contribution to the discussion called to attention continuity between morality and science in terms of their methods and explanatory functions. He believed that the means by which we describe moral behaviour and conduct is consistent with the method by which the natural sciences describe and explicate the behaviour of natural phenomena.

Scientific investigations, as Hume saw them, involve generalizations from empirical facts to describe and project the behavior of natural phenomena and their relations, and he believed moral inquiries involve a similar task. Based on the similarity that he thought the behavior of moral phenomena bears with the behavior of natural phenomena, he was convinced that moral and natural philosophy are both grounded in empirical foundations; their objects of study are locatable in the natural or empirical world.[14] He bolstered this view by arguing that, as in natural philosophy, in moral philosophy, general principles are conclusions we induce or generalize from empirical observations and responses to facts about human nature or experience. Reflecting on the method of the natural scientists, he declared:

> Men are now cured of their passion for hypotheses and systems in natural philosophy, and will hearken to no arguments but those which are derived from experience. It is full time they should attempt a like reformation in all moral disquisitions; and reject every system of ethics, however subtle or ingenious, which is not founded on fact and observation."[15]

We glean from the passage Hume's belief that a scientific reasoning about moral matters requires factual data about human experience. To draw a legitimate moral conclusion, we require facts about the person, especially, his character, and how he conducts himself in relation to others. In the absence of facts about the person, the conclusions we draw about him may merely be speculative and baseless, and therefore unscientific. Consider in the following passage Hume's conviction of the success that he thought could be obtained by studying moral issues on the model of the empirical sciences:

> The only object of [moral] reasoning is to…reach the foundation of ethics, and find those universal principles, from which all censure or approbation is ultimately derived. As this is a question of fact, not of abstract science, we can only expect success, by following the experimental method, and deducing general maxims from a comparison of particular instance" (E. 174).

Hume tells us in the passage the view that issues about the foundation or source of moral judgments is an empirical matter. In particular, issues concerning the basis of moral judgments involve questions about the scientific procedure of formulating them. Hume suggests in the passage the view that, like generalizations in the natural sciences, moral judgments are generalizations from the comparisons we make about particular moral observations (experiences), especially their causal impacts. As supported by his remarks in the preceding two passages, Hume sometimes used the terms "derive" and "induce" interchangeably to describe the reasoning process of inferring scientific conclusions from factual responses and observations. But he must be understood in those references loosely to imply an inductive inference, since science for him is an inductive system founded in causal explanations. (I will fully discuss this view in chapter two.) In Hume's moral thought, general laws of morality are induced from our experience of the way human beings act, think, feel and conduct themselves in relation to others.

A fundamental conviction upon which Hume defended his belief in continuity between morality and science involved his observation that all scientific inquiries have their roots in "the science of human nature." He wrote: "there is no question of importance, whose decision is not compriz'd in the science of man; and there is none, that can be decided with any certainty, before we become acquainted with that science" (T. xvi). Hume's conception of science as rooted in human nature may be understood in at least two ways. The first involves his observation that raw materials for scientific explanations are scientific data we receive from sense experience (that is, from sense impressions).[16] The second, which is my emphasis in this chapter, applies to Hume's conception of scientific reasoning as involving generalizations from facts and observations limited by the natural realm in which human beings conduct their affairs. On this view, Hume conceived the scientific character of a theory in terms of the attention that the theory gives to facts about human experience. This idea is supported by one of his references to the

view that all scientific inquiries are rooted in the science of human nature. He argued: "And as the science of man is the only solid foundation for the other sciences, so the only solid foundation we can give to this science itself must be laid on experience and observation" (T. xvi). As Hume saw it, the limits of scientific inquiries do not transcend the realm of human affairs.[17] Every scientific investigation, including physics, political science, and even logic and mathematics, on Hume's view, involves the study of the science of human experience. In their unique ways, each of them attempts to provide us with knowledge to adequately understand human nature, its principles, behavior, and its place in the natural world. Hume argued:

> 'Tis evident, that all the sciences have a relation, greater or less, to human nature; and that however wide any of them may seem to run from it, they still return back by one passage or another. Even *Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, and Natural Religion*, are in some measure dependent on the science of Man...If therefore the sciences of Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, and Natural Religion, have such a dependence on the knowledge of man, what may be expected in the other sciences, whose connexion with human nature is more close and intimate? The sole end of logic is to explain the principles and operations of our reasoning faculty, and the nature of our ideas: morals and criticism regard our tastes and sentiments: and politics consider men as united in society, and dependent on each other. (T. Xv, Hume's emphasis).

Hume was not the first to measure the adequacy and acceptability of scientific inquiries and generalizations in terms of their empirical character. This idea, he believed, had been already initiated and established by the scientific systems of his predecessors, for example, by Francis Bacon. And he was not hesitant to believe the same about the criterion for testing the adequacy and acceptability of general principles of morality. He argued:

> 'Tis no astonishing reflection to consider, that the application of experimental philosophy to moral subjects should come after that to natural at the distance of above a whole century; since we find in fact, that there was about the same interval betwixt the origins of these sciences; and the reckoning from THALES to SOCRATES, the space of time is nearly equal to that betwixt my Lord BACON and some late philosophers in *England*, who have begun to put the science of man on a new footing, and excited the curiosity of the public (T. xvi-vii).[18]

In his search for the empirical basis of moral judgments, Hume rejected rationalists' conception of human beings as detached rational agents--beings whose ethical lives transcend the natural or empirical realm. Hume's recourse to naturalize moral inquiries scientifically upon empirical foundation departs from rationalists' scientific and moral systems. Rationalists method of scientific and moral reasoning involves intuitive deductions or thought experiments.[19] Hume's repudiation of the reasoning procedure of his rationalist counterparts was largely influenced by the continuity that he saw between moral inquiries and empirical investigations. His targets included the Cambridge Platonic rationalists, such as Ralph Cudworth, Samuel Clarke and John Balguy. Cudworth, for example, believed that "moral

distinctions are reflections on fixed and immutable features of reality." Cudworth was influenced by his epistemic view that "Knowledge, after all, is immutable: it is of things as they are and would not be *knowledge* of them if they could be other than they are." Balguy also believed that "the Foundation of Morality must be laid either in the Truth or Nature of Things themselves." [20] Hume saw the reasoning procedure of the Platonic rationalists as unscientific and "speculative" because, on his view, they do not induce or generalize moral judgments empirically from facts about human nature and its manifestations in action. We glean this view from his declaration in the following passage.

> I found that the moral Philosophy transmitted to us by Antiquity, labour'd under the same inconvenience that has been found in their natural philosophy, of being entirely hypothetical, & depending more upon invention than Experience. Every one consulted his Fancy in erecting Schemes of Virtue & of Happiness, without regarding human Nature, upon which every moral Conclusion must depend. This therefore I resolved to make my principal Study, & the source from which I wou'd derive every Truth in Criticism as well as Morality."[21]

By contrast to the empirical procedure that he endorsed and adopted for his moral science, Hume saw the approaches of moral philosophers of rationalist persuasion as a "tedious lingering" speculative system which in his view has no scientific basis. He recommended:

> Here then is the only expedient, from which we can hope for success in our philosophical researches, to leave *the tedious lingering method*, which we have hitherto followed, and instead of taking now and then a castle or village on the frontier, to march up directly to the capital or center of these sciences, to human nature itself; which being masters of, we may every where else hope for easy an victory (T. xvi, my emphasis).

Hume identified the speculative "lingering method" that he condemned with the reasoning procedure "where a general abstract principle is first established, and is afterwards branched out into a variety of inferences and conclusions" (E. 174). Speculative method of moral reasoning, Hume tells us, formulates general principles of morality non-empirically by intuitive reflection before analyzing and testing their possible empirical application to practical moral situations.[22] By contrast, Hume argued that, to be scientific, we formulate moral judgments empirically by grounding them in facts about human nature. In the scientific study of moral subjects, Hume argued, we "glean up our experiments in this science from a cautious observation of human life, and take them as they appear in the common course of the world, by men's behaviour in company, in affairs, and their pleasures" (T. 273). The empirical or scientific study of moral phenomena, according to Hume's argument, derives moral principles from an observation of the ordinary (natural) way people behave and conduct their lives in relation to others.

Descartes' formal mathematical scientific system of reasoning is an illustrative paradigm of the formal reasoning procedure that Hume condemned.[23] Hume did not agree with Descartes' belief that mathematical reasoning is the foundation of all science. Descartes set out to establish "a firm and

permanent structure" in the sciences formally on pure rational foundation, especially by mathematical reasoning.[24] Hume, by contrast, set forth to establish the foundation of natural science experimentally, especially, in causal reasoning about the principles of human nature.[25] Hume argued that causal reasoning grounded in generalizations from experience is the permanent, and irresistible (Hume described them as "durable or constant") foundation of science (T. 410). An experiential reasoning, on Hume's understanding, consists in causal reasoning involving past observations. Hume explained:

> The existence, therefore, of any being can only be proved by argument from its cause or its effect; and these arguments are founded entirely on experience. If we reason *a priori*, anything may appear able to produce anything. The falling of a pebble may, for aught we know, extinguish the sun; or the wish of a man control the planets in their orbits. It is only experience, which teaches us the nature and bounds of cause and effect, and enables us to infer the existence of one object from that of another. Such is the foundation of moral reasoning, which forms the greater part of human knowledge, and the source of all human action and behaviour (E. 164).

It must be clarified that Hume, in his polemic argument against speculative reasoning about the natural world, did not condemn "general or abstract principles" in themselves. He believed that a general or an abstract principle "may be more perfect in itself," depending on how we proceed to formulate it (E. 174). In his criticism of rationalistic philosophical system, Hume's remarks about general principles involved a concern about the manner in which rationalists proceed to formulate them. As we have noted, a principal task of Hume's philosophy involved the search for a firm and formidable foundation of scientific and moral principles. The search for general principles of morality was a task that engaged his attention in his *Treatise*.[26] This interest led him to be deeply concerned with the methods by which scientific reasoning lead us to formulate general principles, not only to guide and regulate the behaviour of events and actions, but also to explain and understand the principles underlying their causal manifestations. Hume's polemic remarks in his philosophical writings (especially, those directed against rationalistic philosophical systems) were targeted against philosophical and scientific modes of reasoning not rooted in experience. Hence, his denunciation of abstract principles involved a repudiation of speculative (non-empirical) means of formulating general principles of morality.

Questions concerning Hume's view of the exact *degree* of generality of general principles of morality, as compared to scientific principles, will be discussed in our assessment of his continuity thesis in the next chapter. For now, we are concerned with his view regarding the empirical character of general principles of morality. I want to call attention to textual evidence to bolster the argument that, in his debate with rationalists, Hume did not reject the practical relevance of general or abstract principles to the study of moral issues. As he maintained, "the influence of general rules and maxims on the passions very much contributes to facilitate the effects of all the principles, which we shall explain in the progress of this treatise" (T. 293). His emphasis on this view is contained in his further argument that "*general rules* have a great influence upon pride and humility, as well as on all the other passions"

(T. 292, Hume's emphasis). As we shall see in chapter three, in his rejection of the intuitive reasoning procedure of the rationalists, Hume only doubted the motivating efficacy of abstract or general principles. Though he was skeptical about their ability to motivate us into action, he actually believed that we require abstract general principles of reasoning to help us calculate the right means of efficiently and optimally fulfilling our desires and ground projects. Consider one of his arguments regarding the practical relevance of general and abstract principles, such as mathematical reasoning.

> Mathematics, indeed, are useful in all mechanical operations, and arithmetic in almost every art and profession: But 'tis not of themselves they have any influence. Mechanics are the art of regulating the motions of bodies *to some design'd or purpose*; and the reason why we employ arithmetic in fixing the proportions of numbers, is only that we may discover the proportions of their influence and operation. A merchant is desirous of knowing the sum total of his accounts with any person: Why? but that he may learn what sum will have the same *effects* in paying his debt, and going to market, as all the particular articles taken together. *Abstract or demonstrative reasoning, therefore, never influences any of our actions, but only as it directs our judgment concerning causes and effects*; which leads us to the second operation of the understanding (T. 413-14, emphasis added).

We glean from the passage Hume's belief in the pragmatic (practical) utility of general rules and principles, especially their instrumental role of helping us formulate judgements about causal effects of actions.

Now, two general problems may be observed about my interpretation. The first applies to the view that Hume believed that we formulate moral principles and judgments by the study of empirical facts about human nature. One may be puzzled by this view, given controversy over Hume's remarks regarding "fact-value" and "is-ought" inferential relations. The problem is based on the old debate regarding Hume's position on the relevance of "facts" to moral reasoning. On the orthodox view, Hume believed that value judgments cannot be premised on factual conclusions. The truism of the view that Hume undercut facts from moral issues may raise a fundamental problem about my interpretation. Therefore, the problem requires a careful study of its own. Chapter six discusses and responds to the problem. The second problem is also interesting. It involves a concern about Hume's belief that we induce moral judgments from an observational study of human behavior. Three subsidiary (but important) questions may be asked in this regard. The first is the question whether moral judgments are amenable to observational test.[27] We shall discuss this problem when we turn in the next chapter to critically examine Hume's continuity thesis, especially, in the discussion whether there can be general laws of explanation of moral behavior. The second is a question about relation between Hume and the early logical empiricists (positivists) regarding their emphasis on observation as a test of the empirical content of a scientific theory. This problem is related to the first general problem regarding Hume's position on the factual content of moral judgments. It appears that Hume's

emphasis on empirical observation as a testing criterion of the explanatory efficacy and scientific adequacy of a theory anticipated the scientific program of logical empiricism that characterized the scientific system of the early twentieth-century. I will venture a detailed discussion of the relation between Hume's naturalistic philosophical thought and the philosophical system of the logical empiricists when I turn to explore the place of facts in Hume's naturalistic thought in chapter six.

On the third subsidiary problem, one may argue that Hume's naturalistic claim that we induce moral principles by studying the behavior of human nature commits him to "behaviorism." I want to examine this problem a bit more closely. It would be misleading to link Hume's account with "behaviorism," neither the methodological nor the logical variants. "Behaviorism" is an ambiguous doctrine, but generally, what is often identified as "methodological behaviorism" involves the belief that no reference to mentalistic items is relevant to any rigorous scientific explanation.[28] The variant called "logical behaviorism" moves a step further to insist on the more radical view that there are no such things as mentalistic dispositions to refer to in any adequate theory of science.[29] On this view, the so-called mental terms are nothing but behavior terms. The mind is just behavior and disposition to behavior.[30] On the standard behaviorist view, the claim that Skinner is thirsty and desires to drink water, for example, is merely a claim that Skinner will be disposed to perform a chain of behavior activities, such as walking towards the drinking tap with a drinking cup in hand. But on the standard objection, the real (actual) intentions and other psychological dispositions such as feelings and desires are left unexplained in the behaviorist theory of scientific explanation. The description of the overt behavior of an actor misses the underlying intentional structures that explain the motive and other causal influences of the individual. On the example, we might be wrong about our prediction of Skinner's intention from his behavior. He might be moving towards the drinking tap merely to fetch water for another person, or to check whether the tap actually works. Thus, behaviorists' explanatory model is incoherent. To explain a mental term such as desire, the behaviorist account requires behavior concepts, but the behaviorist have no other independent concept to explain behavior or dispositional concepts other than mental terms.

Hume's naturalistic approach to moral behavior would commit him to behaviorism if he denied the empirical reality of mental dispositions, such as feelings and intentions, and reduced them to behavior terms. There is simply no good evidence that Hume reduced natural events to behavioral events. Though he rejected Cartesian dualism, Hume conceived of mental events and the behaviour that they causally manifest as independent activities; for Hume, cause and effects are two distinct and separate entities. Nowhere in Hume's writings is there a detailed account of

his view on the exact nature of mental events. But in some of his casual remarks, we find the idea that mental events are "psychophysical" mechanisms that causally determine the intentional behaviors and activities of human agents.[31] For example, he wrote:

> And indeed, when we consider how aptly *natural* and *moral* evidence cement together, and form only one chain of argument betwixt them, we shall make no scruple to allow, that they are of the same nature, and deriv'd from the same principles...Here is a connected chain of natural causes and voluntary actions...; [they are] train of causes cemented together by what we are pleas'd to call a *physical necessity*. The same experience'd union has the same effect on the mind, whether the united objects be motives, volitions and actions; or figure and motion (T. 406-7; Hume's emphasis).[32]

Unlike the behaviorist, Hume conceived psychophysical events that causally effect intentional behaviors as separate and distinct events, at least in terms of their temporal priority. According to his causal theory, "all those objects, of which we call the one *cause* and the other *effect*, consider'd in themselves, are as distinct and separate from each other, as any two things in nature" (T. 405; Hume's emphasis). Hume held the same view about causal relations between psychological motives and the actions (behavior) that they effect, as illustrated in his account of how psychophysical states cause actions. Hume even anticipated the objection against behaviorism that any attempt to reduce mental terms to behavioral terms would be entangled with absurd circularity. We now turn to discuss the question regarding what, on Hume's view, a theory of moral explanation specifically consists of.

1.2. HUME'S CAUSAL THEORY OF MORAL EXPLANATION

The above general outline has identified Hume's naturalism to consist in a search for continuity between moral and scientific reasoning.[33] This section calls attention to the view that Hume's continuity thesis is particularly about *causal explanation* of human behavior. Scientific explanations for Hume are causal accounts, and his search for empirical or scientific basis of moral judgments involved a concern about causal accounts involving the psychological mechanism that motivates moral agents to behave and think as they do. That is, by drawing continuity between moral and scientific reasoning, Hume developed a naturalistic theory that sees moral inquiries as issues about causal explanations of moral behavior. He conceived moral and scientific inquiries as both about causal accounts involving the behavior of the phenomena under their respective investigations. As scientific inquiries for Hume deal with causal accounts of the regular behavior of natural phenomena, he conceived moral inquiries as also about causal accounts of the regular behavior of human nature, especially mental causes of moral actions.

Understanding Hume's naturalistic moral theory as causal explanatory theory of moral behavior fits in consistently with his general philosophical interest in causal explanations.

Hume's empirical philosophy is grounded in his causal theory.[34] Generally, Hume's philosophical empiricism is characterized by his conception of all scientific reasoning (except for mathematical knowledge) as causal. Hume was a "scientific philosopher," as I may put it, who saw every event and action as amenable to causal explanation. On his understanding, all our reasoning regarding factual matters is causal. He wrote: "Its evident, that all reasonings concerning *matters of facts* are founded on the relation of cause and effect, and that we can never infer the existence of one object from another, unless they be connected," causally (T. 649). To hold a warranted belief about any factual matter, "we must be perfectly acquainted with the idea of cause; and in order to that, must look about us to find something that is the cause of another" (T. 649). Hume's consideration of factual matters as issues about causal explanations is a fundamental belief that he held about both science and morality. His moral science conceives moral matters as, like any other scientific issue, factual issue. We recall from the earlier outline his contention that the issue concerning the empirical foundation of moral reasoning is a "*question of fact*, not of abstract science" (E. 74.). We recall also his argument that "in all moral disquisitions" we must "reject every system of ethics, however subtle or ingenuous, which is not founded on *fact and observation*" about human nature. (E. 175, emphasis added). If moral issues are factual matters, and all factual matters require causal explanations, then in Hume's account, moral issues require causal explanations. Since he conceived all empirical matters as factual problems that require causal explanations, Hume's naturalistic concern about the empirical or scientific foundation of moral judgments involved a search for causal explanation of moral behaviour, particularly, the explanation of the mental causes of human acts.

Hume was fundamentally interested in understanding and explaining the complex dynamics of human behaviour, conduct and actions. He understood this to involve a demand for causal explanations of the psychological dispositions that cause human beings to think and act the way they do.[35] This issue is related to the question of what principles of the mind causally explain the behavior of moral agents. As we shall see in chapter four, Hume conceived the way we behave and conduct ourselves (our character) as causally explainable by our mental states. If we understand the principles that explain the behavior of moral subjects, by examining the mind, we can sensibly (intelligibly) understand why they behave as they do. But we have no direct access to the mind except through the acts of the person. In the effort to understand their minds, we examine their motives as expressed in action. We shall then understand the causal relation between a mental state or character (as revealed by their motives) and actions. Hume argued:

> 'Tis evident, that when we praise any actions, we regard only the motives that produced them, and consider the actions as signs or indications of certain principles in the mind and temper. The external performance has no merit. We must look within to find the moral

> quality. This we cannot do directly; and therefore fix our attention on actions, as on external signs. But these actions are as signs; and the ultimate object of our praise and approbation is the motive, that produced them (T. 477).

Understanding the mental dispositions that explain the regular pattern of life of a person provides us with clues regarding how to deal with him, particularly the legitimate basis of our assessment of his moral responsibility. Familiarity with a person's psychological dispositions or character also provides a framework for making decisions about how to control, regulate, and train him, given our knowledge of what caused him to behave in the particular way he did. Therefore, on Hume's thought, causal explanation is indispensable to not only an intelligible understanding of why moral agents are caused to behave in a particular way, but also the formulation of proper moral principles to effectively regulate their behavior, including our assessments of their moral culpability

As we noted, in developing his scientific moral system, Hume drew analogy from the empirical sciences. One of the things he learned involved the observation that the empirical sciences were concerned with causal explanations. On his observation, scientific theories are designed to explain and understand the manifestations of natural objects and events by exploring their causal mechanisms (principles). On his view, the sciences explore questions such as why natural objects and events behave and occur the way they do. Why were human beings the fittest in the natural selection of species? Why are there limitations to the cognitive abilities of human beings? Why do power-obsessed politicians usually overturn their states into political crises? Hume thought questions such as these are demands for causal explanations. By understanding the causal processes and history of natural objects and events, the sciences formulate laws to describe and explain why natural objects and events behave and occur the way they do. It is also based on understanding the causal history and principles of natural objects and events that, on Hume's observation, the empirical sciences project, predict, and subsequently control or regulate their future behavior and occurrences.[36] If in our experience, we have observed particular events or actions to constantly follow a particular repeated or uniform pattern, we can discover a general law to explain the former as causally necessitated by the latter. (More on this in chapter two.) Hume believed that the behaviors or characters of moral agents are explainable in the same way that the sciences explain the behavior of natural events and processes. He believed that "in judging of the actions of men we must proceed upon the same maxims as when we reason concerning external objects" (T. 403).

We shall see in the next chapter that Hume's causal theory of moral behavior is grounded in his "regularity" principle. He conceived of the principle of regularity as the law that the natural

sciences employ to explain the causal behavior of natural events. He believed that it is the same laws that explain the behavior of human actions. We explain the behavior of natural events in terms of our experience of constant (regular) relation between (or among) the events under study. Equally, we explain the behavior of human actions by our experience of constant (regular) relation of a person's character (psychological disposition) and his actions. As Hume argued,

> "[N]ecessity… has universally, tho' tacitly, in the schools, in the pulpit, and in common life, been allow'd to belong to the will of man, and no one has ever pretended to deny, that we can draw inferences concerning human actions, and that those inferences are founded on the experience'd union of like actions with like motives and circumstances" (T. 409).

Every action, on Hume's thought, has a determinate cause. Though some actions are accidentally caused (without a deliberate intention), but generally our pattern of behaviour are causally determined by our character. The criminal has a pattern of criminal behaviour that appropriately identifies him a criminal. The thief has a pattern of stealing profile that makes him a thief. In all these, there is a record or history of constant behaviour that characterizes the individual. We shall see more of this when we discuss Hume's view of moral character in chapter four.

Now, the following important clarification needs to be made about the argument. By claiming that Hume construed moral and scientific explanations as causal explanations, I am not addressing general questions, such as any of the following: (a) whether he considered *all* scientific theories as explanatory in character; (b) whether he regarded *all* scientific explanations as causal explanations; or (c) whether he regarded *all* causal explanations or accounts as scientific.[37] These issues might be implied by his continuity thesis but it is not my intention to defend these stronger claims in this chapter. I think Hume assumed the weaker thesis that there are causal explanations in the sciences, but I will not explicitly defend it. I must also point out that I do not want to imply the view that scientific problems are exclusively about "why" questions. Why scientific questions may have implications for *how questions*. For example, the explanation of *why* objects fall when released above the surface of the earth, when not intercepted, is also helpful in understanding *how* objects behave according to the laws of gravitation. For the purpose of convenience, in my outline of Hume's naturalistic theory of scientific explanation, I will focus on why questions but I leave it open for the account to apply also to "how" questions.[38]

1.3. HUME'S CONTINUITY THESIS AND RECENT DEBATE ON NATURALISM

The interpretation of Hume's naturalistic moral theory to consist in a defense of continuity between morality and the empirical sciences is consistent with a central theme in

contemporary debate about naturalism.[39] In this final section, I defend the connection to call attention to contemporary relevance of my study of Hume's naturalism. The resurrection of the issue in contemporary philosophy gives a new life to the study of Hume's naturalistic defense of continuity between morality and science because it can provide new insights. The discussion is also important because it calls attention to the particular kind of naturalism with which I identify my Humean theory. I find Hume an interesting historical root of a version of the naturalistic thesis that occupies a central place in contemporary philosophy; a similar theme of the recent debate about naturalism is implicit in Hume's defense of continuity between morality and science.[40] Just as we have seen in Hume, an important feature of recent philosophical debates about naturalism involves questions about continuity between philosophy and science.[41] As David Armstrong (1997) characterizes it, naturalism "is the contention that, except for the primitive varieties of ordinary experience, it is natural science that gives us whatever detailed knowledge we have of the world."[42] Armstrong's definition describes a "reductive" version of naturalism with which I do not identify my Humean naturalistic commitment. Reductive naturalism restricts scientific study to the physical sciences, especially physics. W.V.O Quine is one of the popular figures known for the restrictive or reductive version of naturalism.[43] In his "Epistemology Naturalized,"[44] he attempts to systematize epistemology as a chapter of psychology. Observe in the following passage his naturalistic thesis. "[I]t may be more useful to say rather that epistemology still goes on, though in a new setting and a clarified status. Epistemology, or something like it, simply falls into place as a chapter of psychology and hence of natural science. It studies a natural phenomenon, viz., a physical human subject".[45]

On my view, the reductive version has a narrow view of science. I contrast my Humean naturalism with the reductive version. On the naturalism that I find in Hume, the idea of science broadly encompasses both the physical and the social sciences (such as sociology). On this non-reductive naturalistic view, moral and social explanations are loosely considered as natural scientific theories. Although I do not endorse his strict parity thesis, the more open (broader) view of naturalism is supported by David Brink's argument that "moral facts *are* natural and social scientific (e.g., social, psychological, economic, and biological) facts."[46]

Now, despite my disagreement with the particular way that Armstrong and Quine describe it, their definition gives us, at least, an idea that naturalism generally asserts continuity between philosophy and science. The defense of continuity between philosophy and science is a popular theme in the recent naturalistic debate. In his naturalistic system, Quine for example, considers epistemological problems as scientific questions that can be successfully answered by the methods of the empirical sciences. His approach is consistent with the Humean continuity thesis

according to which philosophical problems (including moral problems) are answerable empirically by scientific procedure. Quine, in his "Philosophical Progress in Language Theory," explicitly identifies his empirical naturalism to consist in a defense of continuity between philosophy and science.[47] Consider his argument: "Philosophy, or what appears to me under that head, is *continuous* with science. It is a wing of science in which aspects of method are examined more deeply, in a wider perspective than elsewhere."[48] Frank Jackson quotes Kim Sterelny to characterize what he calls "moderate naturalism" in a similar way. "Naturalists are physicalists…[b]ut naturalists have methodological views about philosophy as well; we think philosophy is *continuous* with natural sciences. On this view, philosophical theories are conjectures whose fate is ultimately determined by empirical investigation."[49] Richard Boyd argues in a similar vein that "philosophy is an empirical enquiry *continuous* with the sciences and with, for example, history and empirical social theory."[50] Thus, recent naturalists share the Humean thesis that philosophical problems are scientific problems; they are also valuable through the application of scientific methods of investigation. Generally, philosophers who are committed to the naturalistic thesis believe that scientific and philosophical questions differ only in generality or subject matter.[51] As we saw, Hume, from a moral point of view, was committed to a similar conception of philosophical investigations.[52]

My interpretation of Hume's moral theory in contemporary terms may raise a puzzle. The more than two-century gap that exists between Hume and our contemporary thoughts may raise a query regarding the applicability and significance of his thoughts to our contemporary philosophical discussions. Certainly, I locate the thesis in the history of philosophy. But I regard its contemporary implication as illuminating. I agree with the idea that the task of a historian of philosophy goes beyond the *critical study* of a historical philosophical theory.[53] I believe that the critical study and interpretation of a historical philosophical theory can be undertaken in the context of contemporary philosophical discussion relevant to the issues that concerned the particular scholar. He can aim at deepening our understanding by contributing to an ongoing philosophical debate from a historical standpoint.[54] With this understanding of the task of a historian of philosophy, the contemporary framework of my study of Hume's eighteenth-century moral theory is not puzzling. I regard my study as a contribution to our contemporary naturalistic debate about continuity between philosophical approach and the method of the empirical sciences. Its historical framework is due to its approach from the standpoint of the critical study of a historical moral theory, Hume's moral philosophy.

Chapter 2

HUME'S MORAL SCIENCE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses a connection between Hume's regularity theory of causal laws and his naturalistic moral theory. Chapter one interpreted Hume's naturalism about morality as grounded in a continuity thesis that conceives moral inquiries as consistent with scientific investigations, particularly, in terms of their method and explanatory functions. We see the argument particularly in his discussions of liberty and necessity both in the *Treatise* and the *Enquiry*. About Hume's continuity thesis, we need to ask: Is there a uniformity in the human realm as in the natural realm from which similar general laws of the natural sciences can be formulated to explain human and moral behavior? What would be the nature of such explanatory general laws of moral and human behavior? This chapter explores these questions to critically examine the continuity thesis upon which Hume's ethical naturalism is founded.

The first part of the discussion will show Hume's defense of uniformity in the moral realm from which he thought he could formulate general laws of moral science. The second half acknowledges the view that Hume was unclear about the general character of the law of uniformity that he adopted from the sciences to defend his moral science. The problem is an issue about how we define general laws. In response to the problem, I will provide a Humean argument to show that success of Hume's naturalistic argument does not require of him the ability to defend "strict general laws" of morality on the model of the alleged strict laws of scientific explanations (in terms of their degree of generality and precision). In other words, Hume's success on his naturalistic argument needs not be measured by his ability to establish strict continuity between general laws of morality and the so-called "nomic laws" of the natural sciences. All that he needed to show was that there are general laws of morality which scientifically explain the causal behavior of moral agents, whether or not they are of different degree of generality and precision as those of the natural sciences should not be a concern. General laws of moral science *may* differ in their degree of generality and precision than say general laws of physics, just as the laws of psychology may quite differ from the laws of mathematical science. Hume only needed to show

the similarity of their explanatory efficacy, in terms of the phenomena under their respective fields of study. The difference is not a variation about their natural kinds.[1]

2.1. THE PLACE OF HUMAN NATURE IN THE CAUSAL ORDER OF NATURE

Hume's conception of human behavior as causally determined is grounded in his view regarding the place of human nature in the causal order. In developing his moral science, he saw no relevant gap between the natural and the moral order.[2] As applied to natural phenomena, he conceived moral phenomena (such as human behaviour) as causally ordered and explicable by "the law of uniformity." According to this law, our beliefs in, and explanations of, causal behaviour of natural events are nothing but habitual (natural) judgments based on our experience of constant or regular association of related events. Our experience of uniformity in the constant association of events induces us to naturally conceive them as causally related in a certain way. Based on his conviction in uniformity in human nature (human behaviour), whatever degree of uniformity it may be, Hume believed that human actions are susceptible to the natural law that explains the behaviour of natural phenomena. The law that explains the behavior of events in the natural realm, in a sense, is the same law that explain the behavior of human nature in the moral realm. Consider Hume's argument.

> We must certainly allow, that the cohesion of the parts of matter arises from natural and necessary principles, whatever difficulty we may find in explaining them: And for a like reason we must allow, that human society is founded on like principles; and our reason in the latter case, is better than even that in the former, because we not only observe that, men *always* seek society, but can also explain the principles on which this universal propensity is founded (T. 402).

Hume's naturalistic moral system repudiates any claim of discontinuity between human nature and the rest of "organic existence." According to one of his arguments, "when we consider how aptly *natural* and *moral* evidence cement together, and form only one chain of argument betwixt them, we shall make no scruple to allow, that they are of the same nature, and deriv'd from the same principles" (T. 406). He construed moral behaviour and human nature "as part of nature in a broader sense, in which all normal organisms are understood as being well situated, in their capacities, to their environments and coexistent in a general system of fundamental harmony."[3] Of course, it seems absurd to say that the ontology or the nature of moral phenomena, such as human behaviour, and that of natural phenomena, such as the eye of an animate creature, is the same. The ontology of moral and other natural phenomena differ in terms of their *kinds*. They differ in their kinds in the same way that an eye is different in kind from a piece of stone. But the eye and a piece of stone are both natural entities. Similarly, it seems plausible to say that the

moral character of a person and the eye are both natural entities, despite the differences in their kinds. We can say plausibly that stones and trees are unique and different in kinds and yet maintain that both are natural entities. Similarly, we can say that, comparatively, a moral phenomenon, such as the character of a person, and a nonmoral phenomenon, such as the leaf of a tree, are unique and different in kinds and yet plausibly maintain that both are natural entities.

What draws moral and the other kinds of natural phenomena in close relationship, in the Humean account, is the "law of regularity." In other words, the naturalistic character of both moral and non-moral phenomena is defined by the fact that both are explainable by the law of regularity. We can appreciate the argument in the context of the analogy that Hume drew between the rules of justice and the laws of nature. In Hume's thought, it is not out of place to call the principles of justice the laws of nature. The argument is supported by a clarification that he made about the specific sense in which his references to the concept of "natural" ought to be understood.

> To avoid giving offence, I must here observe, that when I deny justice to be natural virtue, I make use of the word, *natural*, only as oppos'd to *artificial*. In another sense of the word; as no principle of human mind is more natural than the sense of virtue; so no virtue is more natural than justice. Mankind is an inventive species; and where an invention so obvious and absolutely necessary, it may as properly be said to be natural as any thing that proceeds immediately from original principles, without the intervention of thought or reflexion. Tho' the rules of justice be *artificial*, they are not *arbitrary*. Nor is the expression improper to call them *Laws of Nature*; if by natural we understand what is common to any species, or even if we confine it to mean what is inseparable from the specie (T. 484).

The laws of justice, Hume's typical example of the laws of morality, and the laws of nature both share a common character in terms of their functions: they are the laws that explain the regular behaviour of the phenomena under their respective control. The laws of nature are the governing principles that explain the regular behaviour of natural objects. Similarly, Hume conceived the laws of justice (which he also identified as the rules of social convention) as the laws that govern the regularity of co-operative moral behaviour. (Chapter seven defends this view). To return to our example, one thing that makes a piece of stone and a tree, for example, both natural entities consist in the fact that both obey the laws of nature. Similarly, what makes a moral phenomenon, such as the character of a person, and the leaf of a tree both natural objects consists in the fact that both obey the laws of nature. Based on the law of gravitation, we predict that the leaf will drop when released above the surface of the earth, when not intercepted. Similarly, based on the law of human nature (a model of the law of nature), we predict that a person with a knavish character will cheat us when we transact business with him, when properly situated (when given an

opportunity).[4] In both examples, there is regularity (law) that provides the basis of our explanations and predictions.[5] For example, regarding the knave, we can predict that he will cheat us because of our experience of his character (i.e. our repeated observation of his cheating practices). The operations of moral phenomena and natural phenomena are not different: they both follow the regular and uniform order of nature. The uniformity principle holds for moral phenomena as it holds for any other natural phenomena. To fully understand how it operates, let us explore the principle of uniformity closely.

2.1.1. UNIFORMITY IN THE MORAL REALM

The continuity that Hume defended between the laws that explain the behavior of moral and natural phenomena assumes the existence of *uniformity* in human nature as well as in inanimate nature. We require a deeper understanding of his "principle of uniformity". To fully understand how Hume applied the principle, we need to first examine how he described it as he saw its operation in the natural realm. Then, in our critical appraisal of his continuity thesis, we will ask whether, in a plausible way, he can apply the principle in the same way in the human realm.

Hume explained our belief in the uniformity of nature as the results of two causes. He wrote:

> Our idea…of necessity and causation arises entirely from (a) the uniformity observable in the operations of nature, where similar objects are constantly conjoined together, and (b) the mind determined by custom to infer the one from the appearance of the other. These two circumstances form the whole of that necessity, which we ascribe to matter. Beyond the constant *conjunction* of similar objects, and the consequent inference from one to the other, we have no notion of any necessity or connexion (E. 82; the numbering is mine).

Hume highlighted in the passage the view that causal relation is a *mental projection* from an observed *regularity (uniformity)* of causal events. The uniformity condition is contained in the first part of his formal definition of the concept of cause. He argued that, on the first approximation, "we may define a cause to be *an object, followed by another, and where all the objects similar to the first are followed by objects similar to the second*" (E. 76; Hume's emphasis). He added to the partial definition the projection condition. "We may, therefore, suitably to this experience, form another, definition of cause, and call it, *an object followed by another, and whose appearance always conveys the thought to another*" (E. 77, Hume's emphasis).

It is debatable why Hume described his two-joint conditions of belief in causation as "two definitions." One possible interpretation is the view that he intended to regard the two as

mutually independent (exclusive). But this raises the puzzle why he gave two definitions of the same concept. Hume actually misrepresented his own account. Though arguable, a careful observation indicates that Hume did not offer two independent definitions of causation. As he insisted in his discussion, he identified two conditions, the second being a "consequent inference" or mental projection, from the first. It seems to me that the first is only an approximate or a partial definition.[6] What he called "the first definition" is a condition that provides us with evidential basis of our judgments or belief in the existence and operation of causal relations in the natural order. As he explained in the previous passage, an observation of repeated regularity is the evidence that induces the mind to project the existence of causal relations. In the previous passage, he described this as "the consequent inference" from an observed regularity. Thus, in addition to the uniformity condition, Hume's account indicates that our belief in causal relations requires a mental projection from an observed regularity. As he put it, "the appearance of a cause always conveys the mind, by a customary transition, to the idea of the effect" (E. 76-77). We now turn to examine Hume's application of the principle in the moral realm to theorize about the causal behavior of human actions. Our discussion will focus on the plausibility of Hume's belief that there is as much uniformity in the human realm as in nature itself. Our concern is a critical examination whether, in the human realm, Hume could plausibly and consistently defend the principle, as he did in the natural realm.

2.1.2. *CAUSAL DETERMINISM AND HUMAN AGENCY*

Immediately following his account of the grounds of our causal beliefs, Hume turned to argue that our belief in voluntary actions is founded in the same sort of regular relation upon which is founded our belief in physical events, and for the same reasons. He argued:

> These two circumstances form the whole of that necessity, which we ascribe to matter. Beyond the constant *conjunction* of similar objects, and the consequent *inference* from one to the other, we have no notion of any necessity or connexion.
>
> If it appears, therefore, that all mankind have ever allowed, without any doubt or hesitation, that these two circumstances take place in the voluntary actions of men and in the operations of mind; it must follow, that all mankind have ever agreed in the doctrine of necessity, and that they have hitherto disputed, merely for not understanding each other (E. 82-83).

Hume developed the argument as part of his compatibilist account of resolving the debate whether the idea that a voluntary action is causally determined makes sense. As he argued in the *Treatise*, he proposed to "examine that long disputed question concerning *liberty and necessity;* which occurs so naturally in treating the will" (T. 399). On the issue, Hume outlined the position he proposed to defend as follows.

> ...that I may bestow a greater force on my reasoning, I...shall first prove from experience that, our actions have a constant union with our motives, tempers, and circumstances, before I consider the inferences we draw from it. To this end, a very slight and general view of the common course of human affairs will suffice. There is no light in which we take them, that does not confirm this principle (T. 401).

In the effort to defend his continuity thesis that maintains that we find the same causal conjunctions in the moral world as we find in the scientific world, Hume rejected the objection that his compatibilist argument poses a serious problem to the foundation of morality. He anticipated that his causal account of morality might be rejected on the ground that it undermines moral responsibility. A typical argument against the analogy between the laws of human nature and the laws of nature is the claim that the conception of the laws of morality as continuos with the laws of nature poses a threat to human agency, freedom, and responsibility. Thomas Nagel, for example, argues that "once people are seen as parts of the world...there seems no way to assign responsibility to them for what they do. Everything about them, including finally their actions themselves, seems to blend in with the surroundings over which they have no control."[7] The objection is that the belief in causal determination of actions leaves no room for the moral culpability of moral agents. If actions are causally determined, then we cannot hold moral subjects responsible because, on that view, their actions should be seen as caused by external forces over which they had no control.

We shall see in chapter four and five Hume's deeper argument for the rejection of the idea that we cannot consistently say that voluntary actions are causally determined. For our present purpose, I provide a brief outline of Hume's rejection of the view that the laws of nature cannot apply in the moral world, given the voluntary nature of human actions. Hume argued that his opponent's arguments rest on a false understanding of the concept of liberty upon which its ideas of moral agency are founded. He repudiated libertarians who fail to distinguish between "liberty of spontaneity" and "liberty of indifference."[8] Liberty of spontaneity refers to the absence of external constraints or hindrances to the execution of one's decisions and actions.[9] As Hume put it, "liberty of spontaneity" is "that which is oppos'd to violence" (T. 407). Liberty of indifference, on the other hand, refers to libertarian concept of "absolute" or "categorical" freedom that Hume rejected as something that we do not actually have. Specifically, Hume identified liberty of indifference with the absence of causal determination, or as he explained it, "a negation of necessity and causes" (T. 407). This concept of liberty or freedom denies causation in human affairs;[10] it restricts the idea of causal determination to relations among events in the natural world. Hume replied that we only deceive ourselves as *absolutely free* from causal determination. Absolute freedom in the real sense, according to Hume's compatibilist account, is

inconsistent with natural human circumstance. Our decisions and actions are *caused*, at least, by our mental states or dispositions, such as our desires and beliefs.

The problem that Hume saw in the libertarian view was that it confuses the idea of *cause* with the notion of *force* or *interference*. According to Hume's argument, when we categorically reject the idea that free actions are causally determined, we generally confound "the idea of necessity to imply something of force, and violence and constraint of which we are not sensible" (i.e., not caused by our sentiments) (T. 407). We then "persuade ourselves we were govern'd by necessity, and that 'twas utterly impossible to have acted otherwise" (*ibid.*). Thus, confounding "liberty of spontaneity" for "liberty of indifference," we mistakenly believe that freedom and responsibility (human agency) require the *absence of causation and necessity*. We misleadingly reason this way simply because we fail to capture a distinction between agent causation and external force (compulsion).[11] On the contrary, Hume believed that liberty (of the spontaneity kind that we actually have) is compatible with causation. Liberty in the real sense that Hume saw it, as Penelhum argues, merely entails "the absence of interference with the exercise of one's choices, but not the absence of causal determination in the making of those choices."[12] In his compatibilist account, Hume believed that the idea of causal determination is logically inseparable from human agency (including the concepts of freedom and responsibility). For, one is an agent of an action and therefore morally responsible for that action only if the action was causally determined by him.

The foregoing outline calls to attention Hume's belief that it is consistent to conceive of voluntary acts and decisions as causally determined in the case of a liberty of spontaneity. Voluntary acts and decisions are those that are causally determined by the sentiments, such as the desires, will, intentions and motives, of the person who is not acting under coercion. That is, Hume defended the view that it is in the case of a liberty of indifference that we cannot sensibly speak of voluntary actions. Unlike a liberty of spontaneity, the cause involved in a liberty of indifference is an external power (force) that compels the decision and acts of a person, practices that do not originate from the agent's will. As Paul Russell argues, "liberty of spontaneity" (upon which the notions of agency, freedom and responsibility are founded) is distinguishable from "liberty of indifferent" not simply by the *absence* of a cause, but rather by a cause of a different *kind*, that is, force external to the will of a moral agent.[13] When settling issues about freedom and responsibility, Russell cautions, what we need to consider is the problem of how to identify the *nature* of the cause, not simply whether the action was caused. The discussion about Hume's distinction between liberty of spontaneity and liberty of indifference is an important one. The discussion tells us that Hume's consideration of human acts as causally determined does not

imply the view that moral actions are *externally* caused (determined). He specifically identified the "will" as the causal mechanism of our actions.[14] He used this psychological element broadly to include various psychological dispositions, such as our motives, intentions, desires, beliefs, hopes, choices, and the like (T. 399). His point was that we hold a person as an agent of an action, and therefore responsible for that action, by establishing a causal connection between her and her actions through her willings or desires. To understand his compatibilist account, we need to distinguish two types of causes: internal and external causes. He defended the view that voluntary actions are causally determined by our internal (not external) dispositions, particularly, our mental states or character.

Let us conclude the discussion of Hume's argument that the notions of human agency and responsibility make sense in the logic of causal determinism by drawing its implication for his defense of causal explanatory theory of human behaviour. Hume described his "Of liberty and Necessity" (in which he defended his compatibilist idea that human actions are caused) as a "reconciling project" (E. 95). This can mean two things, according to the content of the paper. The first would be his compatibilist argument for logical compatibility between the notions of freedom and necessity. His compatibilism regarding freedom and necessity is the usual way in which his description of his work as a "reconciling project" is commonly interpreted. But there is a second interpretation. His account also looks for reconciliation between moral and scientific explanations. This is consistent with his continuity thesis according to which the methods by which we explain the behaviour and occurrences of natural events are the same methods by which we explain moral acts. By so arguing, he sought reconciliation between principles of scientific and moral explanations. Thus, Hume's "reconciling project" supports his naturalistic defense of continuity between explanatory methods of moral-scientific enquiry and those of the natural sciences. On his observation, moral science and the natural sciences are both founded on the same methods and rely upon a common principle: the principle of uniformity. This principle is the root of Hume's belief that moral and scientific explanations are closely related. In his discussion of the applicability of the principle in the moral realm, Hume restated the principle of uniformity in the following abbreviated form. "The same events follow from the same causes" (E. 83). The *Treatise* version of the same summary formulation of the principle takes the following form: "Like causes still produce like effects" (T. 401). Notice how Hume formulated its analogy (in terms of *form)* in the human realm: "The same motives always produce the same actions" (E. 83). Or as he put it in the *Treatise,* "our actions have a constant union with our motives, tempers, and circumstances" (T. 401). On his view, "As long as actions have a constant union and connexion

with the situation and temper of the agent, however we may in words refuse to acknowledge the necessity, we really [implicitly] allow the thing" (T. 403). Consider his illustration:

> Whether we consider mankind according the difference of sexes, ages, governments, conditions, or methods of education; the same uniformity and regular operation of natural principles are discernible. Like causes still produce like effects; in the same manner as in the mutual action of the elements and powers of nature (T. 401).

The uniformity that Hume found in the moral realm is grounded in his observation of constant or regular connection between our actions and our motives or sentiments. He wrote: "Ambition, avarice, self love, vanity, friendship, generosity, public spirit: these passions, mixed in various degrees, and distributed through society, have been from the beginning of the world, and still are, the source of all the actions and enterprises, which have ever been observed among mankind" (E. 83). Hume's argument was that there is an intimate connection between our actions and our psychological dispositions or character. As we shall see in chapter four, Hume believed that our actions are naturally caused by our sentiments or character. According to one of his arguments, "[i]f any action be either virtuous or vicious, 'tis only as a sign of some quality or character. It must depend upon durable principles of the mind, which extend over the whole conduct, and enter into the personal character" (T. 575).

2.2. CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF HUME'S CONTINUITY THESIS

This section critically examines the continuity thesis upon which Hume's naturalistic moral theory is founded. As we have noted, the continuity thesis assumes that there is as much uniformity in human nature as in the natural realm. This is the basis of Hume's belief that we describe, explicate, and predict moral behavior by the same laws that the natural sciences employ to describe, explicate and predict the behavior of natural phenomena. The exact relation that Hume drew between morality and the sciences in terms of their explanatory efficacy need to be examined clearly. I discuss the problem in two general ways: (a) examination of the analogy that he drew between uniformity in the natural and moral realms, and (b) examination whether, in his continuity thesis, Hume believed that the regularity law of moral explanation shares the same degree of generality as the laws in the natural sciences. I discuss the two in turn.

2.2.1. THE UNIFORMITY PRINCIPLE

About the continuity thesis upon which Hume defended his moral science, it may be asked: Can we reliably predict a person's next behavior to be the same as her past behaviors in the same way that we predict the behavior of natural phenomena based on our experience of its

regular occurrences? It may be argued that Hume was wrong by assuming that a person with a given character behaves and acts in a constant (regular) way all the time, as can be said about the uniform behavior of physical events. Take for example the substance "water." Analyze it in terms of its chemical composition. A critic may say that we will always (constantly) get the chemicals "H_2O." By comparison, take the character of a person, for example, "knavery." Analyze it in terms of its psychological disposition (motives). It may seem hardly acceptable to conclude with an absolute conviction (as we can say about the chemical composition of water) that the person with knavish character will always cheat when he thinks he can get away with it. Of course, it can be said that he will cheat most of the time, given our experience of his knavish character. But it seems it cannot be vouched that he will behave this way always. But this is not so with the case of the chemical behaviour of water. Unless our experiment is flawed in a way, we will always get H_2O chemical composition of water when tested. But it seems no perfect test or observation (knowledge) of the behaviour or character of the knave can warrant any absolute conclusion that the person will cheat always. My response is that Hume did not claim that an absolute uniformity can be found in human nature that serves as an infallible foundation for an *accurate or perfect* prediction of human behaviour. Hume believed that it is false to assume that the uniformity principle is, as it operates both in the human and the natural order, infallible or precise *all the time*. The water example is good, but it is one of the isolated (exceptional) cases where the principle functions perhaps effectively. But this does not exclude the fact that there are also cases of irregularities in the natural order. I will revisit a full discussion of the problem in a related argument shortly.

Hume's naturalistic argument may be rejected from another angle. The objection might be defended from differently related standpoints. One objection might be a rejection of his fundamental assumption that there is as much uniformity in human nature as in the natural order. This view might seem hardly acceptable to our understanding of the complex character of human nature, including its dynamic manifestations. Given its complex character, it seems it hardly makes sense to reduce human nature to any single universal law. As Alexander Rosenberg (1990) writes:

> Social and behavioral scientists--that is, students of human nature--nowadays hardly ever use the term 'human nature'. This reticence reflects both becoming modesty about the aims of their disciplines and a healthy skepticism about whether there is any one thing really worthy of the label 'human nature'... Among anthropologists and sociologists, the label seems too universal and indiscriminate to be useful. The idea that there is a single underlying character that might explain similarities threatens the differences among people and cultures that these social sciences seek to uncover.[15]

From anthropological and sociological points of view, every individual person and culture is distinctively unique and different. Every person has his or her own particular psychological sets of motivations, such as desires, intentions, interests, and preferences. Therefore, any attempt to enclose all human beings under a universal concept and law of human nature seems a threat to our separate and unique individuality.[16] The objection is grounded in the belief that there is an asymmetry between the uniformity that pertains in the natural and the human orders. Unlike the natural order, there are broad irregularities in human nature. Therefore, no fixed and uniform principle of human nature can be identified that can serve as systematic and solid bases from which any precise knowledge and prediction could be formed about human nature (especially the behaviour of a person). The objection assumes that Hume's continuity thesis conceives uniformity in human nature across the board. This assumption is false, a critic may argue. The assumption may be seen as a resurrection of the outdated Platonic/Cartesian metaphysical belief that all human beings share a single (basic) unique essence (attribute). Prominent features of human nature, according to the essentialist view, are "inherent and universal".[17] This mode of Platonic essentialism is a mysterious metaphysical theory that no longer has a philosophical flavor.

A response to the objection requires a deeper understanding of the concept of human nature upon which Hume's continuity thesis is founded. Hume rejected Platonic-Cartesian-Lockean "essentialist" theory of human nature in his theory of personal identity; he did not believe that human beings share one basic essence across the board. In particular, Hume rejected the Lockean theory of personal identity that shares the Cartesian Platonic metaphysical belief that a basic quality, such as consciousness, defines the identity of human beings as belonging to one common species. By contrast, Hume's belief in uniformity of human nature is oriented in his doctrine of "unity of diversity" (or as he called it, "identity of diversity"). The doctrine maintains that a unity (an identity) may be established in diversity, if there is a close relation. The relation is experiential, not logical. Implicitly, the principle underscores Hume's defence of uniformity in human nature.[18] On the micro level, a unity of diverse experiences, on Hume's view, defines the identity of a person.[19] On the macro (or social) level, a unity of diverse experiences defines the uniformity of human nature. Consider how, in the macro-level, Hume formulated the doctrine: "From observing the variety of conduct in different men, we are enabled to form a greater variety of maxims, which still suppose a degree of uniformity and regularity" (E. 85). As we shall see in chapter seven, the commonality of our human nature is, in Hume's social conception of a person, "intersubjective." Although we are distinct and unique individuals, our personal experiences, including our desires, interests and preferences, converge.[20] In a given circumstance, my

particular experience may converge with the experiences of other persons who are similarly situated as I did. This convergence of experiences is the band that, according to Hume's account, unites us as having a common human nature. By this, he did not imply the view that we act or respond exactly the same to similar situations. Hume cautioned: "We must not…expect that this uniformity of human actions should be carried to such length as that all men, in the same circumstances, will always act precisely in the same manner, without making any allowance for the diversity of characters, prejudices, and opinions" (E. 85).

Hume can agree with the critic that no basic essence can be identified that uniformly unites human beings across the board. Hume recognized both natural and artificial differences as well as shared (uniform) features among human beings. He listed human conditions such as "different stations of life… industry, traffic, manufactures, law-suits, war, leagues, alliances, voyages, travels, cities, fleets, ports," as factors "which cause such a *diversity*, and at the same time maintain such a *uniformity* in human life" (T. 402, my emphases).[21] He emphasized: "from observing the *variety of conduct in different men*, we are enabled to form a greater variety of maxims, which still suppose a degree of *uniformity and regularity*" (E. 85, my emphases). Thus, Hume acknowledged irregularities as well as uniformity in the realm of human nature. He held a similar position about the natural order; we observe uniformity as well as irregularities in natural occurrences. As in the human ream, absolute uniformity does not *always* prevail in the natural realm. As Penelhum interprets Hume, "We sometimes find that a particular cause is followed by its typical effect some of the time, but not all of the time."[22] This idea is supported by Hume's own argument:

> There are some causes, which are entirely uniform and constant in producing a particular effect; and no instance has ever yet been found of any failure or irregularity in their operation. Fire has always burned, and water suffocated every human creature: The production of motion by impulse and gravity is an universal law, which has hitherto admitted of no exception. But there are other causes, which have been found more irregular and uncertain; nor has rhubarb always proved a purge or opium a soporific to every one who has taken these medicines (E. 57).

There are as many irregularities in human nature as in inanimate nature. Subsequently, Hume believed that, since we do not suspend our beliefs about the operation of the laws of nature, despite the irregularities we observe in natural occurrences, logically, it is unwarranted to be skeptical about the laws of human nature, when we observe some irregularities in the human realm. The asymmetrical views that we hold about uniformity in the human and the natural realms are, in Hume's view, misleading. We assign different kinds of uniformity to events in the natural and human realms simply because we do not have an inadequate understanding of the uniformity that holds in both the human as well as the natural realms. Given the possibilities of

exceptions, Hume believed that uniformity in both the natural and human order of the universe is less-than-absolute. Nevertheless, he believed that there is sufficient uniformity in both the human and the natural order that provides a warranted ground for *reliable* predictions about human nature, as we can with any natural object or event. As he put it, "there is a general course of nature in human actions as well as in the operations of the sun and the climate" (T. 402-3). Therefore, "when we are well-informed of the motives, sentiments and temper of a person," Hume thought, her "pretexts and appearances no longer deceive us" (E. 85).

Familiarity is an important medium of obtaining scientific knowledge and predictions for Hume.[23] In particular, he believed that we predict the behaviour of a person, when we get to know her by establishing acquaintance with her through, for example, friendship, transactions, interactions, and communication. He defended the argument when he called attention to the pragmatic utility of the experience of human interaction.

> The benefit of that experience acquired by long life and a variety of business and company…instruct us in the principles of human nature, and regulate our future conduct, as well as speculation. By means of this guide, we mount up to the knowledge of men's inclinations and motives, from their actions, expressions, and even gestures; and again, descend to the interpretation of their actions from our knowledge of their motives and inclinations (E. 84-85).[24]

We do form theories about human beings. We do research into human behaviour and conduct. We do have general laws by which we enforce harmonious, peaceful and civil living. Hume claimed that all these could not be possible if we did not assume (if even implicitly) a certain degree of uniformity about human nature. "But were there no uniformity in human actions, and were every experiment which we could form of this kind irregular and anomalous, it were impossible to collect any general observations concerning mankind; and no experience, however accurately digested by reflection, would even serve to any purpose" (E. 85).

Hume's optimistic belief in the possibility of reliable predictions in the human realm must not be interpreted as a denial of the view that our predictions about human nature can fail. We have weaknesses in our human nature (we all have our moments), due to the overriding forces of our natural passions. Some people also have a weak character, for example, because of a bad habit. These are constraints to the possibility of obtaining perfect or absolute knowledge of human nature. Hume argued:

> When an action, as sometimes happens, cannot be particularly accounted for, either by the person himself or by others; we know in general, that the characters of men are, to a certain degree inconstant and irregular. This is…applicable, in a more particular manner, to some persons who have no fixed rule for their conduct, but proceed in a continued course of caprice and inconstancy (E. 88).

Hume argued that this limitation is not a constraint that applies only in the human realm; the natural order also contains irregular occurrences. Hume wrote: "it appears not only that the conjunction between motives and voluntary actions is as irregular and uniform as that between the cause and effect in any part of nature" (E. 88). Let me clarify the argument. Hume's argument rejects a dogmatic belief that does not acknowledge any irregularity in the natural order. But he did not deny the *possibility* of precise physical laws in the natural order, such as Newton's principles like F=MA. However, Hume conceived all regularities as contingent in the sense that we can conceive them to be otherwise (falsifiable). Our beliefs about uniformity (regularity) of events in the natural order are neither intuitively nor demonstratively certain. Irregularities in the natural realm are as possible as in the human realm. In Hume's scientific thought, not all regular occurrences in the natural order are absolutely uniform and exceptionless. He believed that *"such a uniformity in every particular, is founded in no part of nature*" (E. 85, my emphasis). The same holds in the regular behavior of human nature. The point is this. We do not suspend our trust in the uniform operations of the laws of nature, despite some irregularities that we sometimes experience about natural occurrences. How often have meteorologists not failed us about weather forecasts or predictions? Yet, we hardly question the uniform operations of the laws of nature. Equally, some observed irregularities in human nature do not logically justify us to suspend our belief about the uniform operations of the laws of human nature. Hume argued:

> The internal principles and motives may operate in a uniform manner, notwithstanding these seeming irregularities; in the same as winds, rain, clouds and other variations of the weather are supposed to be governed by steady principles; though not easily discoverable by human sagacity and enquiry (E. 88).

Hume's argument indicates that we are not able to predict and explain many observed irregularities because of our natural limitations as humans. There are also some complexities in the natural realm that transcend our ability to completely understand, explain and predict them fully (perfectly). We do not have a perfect understanding of the world because many events in the world operate under secret laws of nature that transcend our mediocre minds. In Hume's words, "It is true, when any cause fails of producing its usual effect, philosophers ascribe not this to any irregularity in nature; but suppose, that some secret causes, in the particular structure of parts, have prevented the operation" (E. 58). For example, biologically, human physiology is a complex and complicated machine that operates under certain concealed principles that we do not yet fully understand, despite our present medical breakthroughs. Because we do not fully understand its secret operations, sometimes we are not successful in discovering the desirable and effective medicine for the body; sometimes the body is immune to certain medications we prescribe for it. Despite the limitations (irregularities) that we experience in the medical sciences, according to

Hume's argument, we do not suspend our trust in medical laws, including diagnoses and prescriptions by physicians. Hume posited the argument in the following way.

> Thus, for instance, when the usual symptoms of health or sickness disappointed our expectation; when medicines operate not with their wonted powers, when irregular events follow from any particular cause, the philosopher and physician are not surprised at the matter, nor are ever tempted to deny, in general the necessity and uniformity of those principles which the animal economy is conducted. They know that a human body is a mighty complicated machine…And that therefore the irregular events, which outwardly discover themselves, can be no proof that the laws of nature are not observed with the greatest regularity in its internal operations and government (E. 87).

Hume developed the argument to bolster his belief that there is uniformity as well as irregularities in the natural order as in human nature. Subsequently, it seems inconsistent to be skeptical about the existence of general laws of behaviour in human nature but affirm the possibility of such laws in the natural order. Exceptions exist in both moral and scientific explanations and predictions.[25] There is no absolute or perfect uniformity in both cases. Yet we do not say there are no general laws of explanations. Similarly, we cannot logically support our scepticism about the idea that general laws are possible in the operation of human nature. Given the view that there are some irregularities in both the human and the natural order, we reason not consistently if we reject the one and affirm the other. As Hume suggested, "the philosopher, if he be consistent, must apply the same reasoning to the actions and volitions of intelligent agents" (E. 88). For, 'tis the sign of an unskillful naturalist to have recourse to different quality [principle], in order to explain every different operation" (T. 282).

2.2.2. THE GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE UNIFORMITY PRINCIPLE

From the above discussions, it can be concluded that the problem about Hume's continuity thesis is not simply the question whether he could successfully defend uniformity in both the natural and the human realms. His logical argument is sound. Given his illustration of departures and irregularities in both the natural and the human realms, we must deny general laws of nature (as they apply in the natural scientific realm) if we deny their application in the human realm.[26] The more intriguing question is whether general moral and natural laws and explanations share the same degree of generality. In his naturalistic argument, was Hume trying to defend the view that general moral and scientific laws and explanations have the same general structure? Did he defend the view that general laws of morality have the same degree of generality as the scientific laws of the empirical sciences? These questions are interesting because rejections of the possibility of general laws of human behavior are often posited on the conviction that any possible explanatory law of human behavior would lack the generality requisite of scientific

explanations.[27] The objection is bolstered by the argument that human behaviour is causally determined and thus explainable by mental states or psychological dispositions, such as desires, motives and beliefs. But psychological dispositions, on the objection, are not fixed. Charles Taylor defends a similar argument in his "interpretive" approach to social science. He thinks it is a mistake to use the method of the natural sciences to study social phenomena because, in his view, "just in being social such phenomena imply the presence of human intelligence, intention, and choice."[28] He thinks "social science in the naturalistic tradition is impaired by 'sterile' notions of methods," and to its doom, it "excludes a consideration of social reality as characterized by intersubjective and common meanings."[29]

On the other front of the objection, it is believed that the possibility of obtaining laws about social-moral phenomena comparable to those in the natural sciences is only a "wishful-thinking," so to speak. According to this view, "it is impossible to make descriptions of social phenomena value-free."[30] For example, it is believed that purported scientific findings about politics will definitely be distorted by political prejudice.[31] The objection is grounded in the belief that there are no precise universal laws about social-moral phenomena. Generalizations in the so-called moral and social explanations lack the "nomic" character requisite of the generalizations of genuine scientific explanations.[32] The objection may be bolstered by, at least, two related arguments. First, it may be defended on the assumption that the basic predicates of moral and social explanations can have no "determinate physical definition."[33] For, the predicates of moral explanations are "multiply realizable".[34] That is, predictions and judgments about moral or human behavior could be obtained in a variety of different ways, for example, according to different individual judgments. It may also be said, for example, that the cause of injustice and particular instances of injustice, in whatever social and economic conditions they actually take place, could have been effected by a variety of somewhat different configurations of social and economic conditions or similar other factors. A particular occurrence of injustice could have been causally effected by an indefinite and perhaps infinite number of sets of factors, such as social, economic, political or religious conditions.[35]

Related to the above problems may be the further objection that moral and social explanations are not closed because, unlike scientific explanations (particularly explanations in physics), they cannot describe all the background causal factors jointly (mutually) responsible for the cause of moral and social actions and events.[36] Thus, one of the most intriguing problems that we face is an issue about how to understand the general character of the general laws (or principles) of moral behavior that Hume adopted from the natural sciences. By defending the analogy, what was Hume's specific understanding of the general character of scientific laws and

explanations? A deep response to the problems is a task I preserve for a future project. Given the complex nature of the problems, in the remaining of the discussions in this chapter, I can only do little more than simply give a rough indication that Hume was not clear about the exact relationship that, in his project, he intended to establish between his theory of moral explanation and the explanatory models of the other empirical sciences. In the end, I will provide a Humean suggestion to salvage Hume's continuity argument by arguing that the success of his moral science does not depend upon his ability to show a strict parity between the general character of moral and physical explanations.

Hume was ambiguous about his view of the general character and the exact degree of generality of general laws. As Alexander Rosenberg points out, "Hume gave no explicit account of the nature of general laws."[37] G. E. M. Anscombe holds a similar view; she thinks Hume was ambivalent on his view regarding the general character of causal laws. In a reference to Hume's account of causal laws, Anscombe argues that, in one way, Hume's "discovery was great," for, he

> made us see that given any cause--or 'total causal situation' for that matter--and its effect, there is not in general any contradiction in supposing the one to occur and the other not occur...But as touching the equation of causality with necessitation, Hume's thinking did nothing against this but curiously reinforced it. For he himself assumed that NECESSARY CONNECTION is an essential part of the idea of the relation of cause and effect, and sought for its nature.[38]

The laws of nature (scientific laws) for Hume are causal laws. But it is not clear whether he regarded causal laws as strictly deterministic in the fashion of the "covering law" model of scientific explanation or mere successive correlation. His ambiguity has led him to be seen as holding an ambivalent position on the following two competing claims about the general character of scientific law: (a) deterministic generalization, and (b) non-deterministic generalization. Regarding (b), it is believed that Hume's regularity principle assumes that causal laws are about successive generalizations. Generalizations of this form, in Hume's account, are not deterministic laws that yield precise or fixed conclusions of the form: Whenever conditions (or events) of a specified kind E occur, certain conditions (or events) of another kind F will also always occur.[39] The interpretation is grounded in the belief that, for Hume, "there can be no rational grounds for the belief that the orderliness, regularity, or lawfulness that has been found in the world so far will persist in the future."[40] On this view, causal laws are nothing but correlation between successive or regular events.[41] This is the standard interpretation of Hume's association principle or regularity law. But recent interpretations in Hume scholarship contend that general laws of causal explanation for Hume are necessary or deterministic laws.[42] This view eschews the received interpretation of Hume as committed to regularity theory of causal relation. It is argued

that causal generalizations for Hume take the form of necessary relation, not merely regular succession. Galen Strawson writes: "Does Hume hold a Regularity theory of causation? The view that he does is very widely held—it seems that it is still the standard view. But there seems to be no evidence for it at all in the *Inquiry*—whatever one thinks about the *Treatise.*"[43] Strawson argues that Hume conceived of the notion of causal necessitation as an idea that is deeply ingrained in our natural (common sense) belief, an idea that we take for granted in our ordinary beliefs about the world.[44] Thus, regarding interpretation (a), some recent Hume scholars believe that Hume construed the laws of nature that causally explain events in the natural world as necessary or deterministic generalizations, necessary relations that yield precise conclusions.[45] The interpretation is supported by some of Hume's own remarks. Consider his argument in the following passage:

> It is universally allowed that matter, in all its operations, is actuated by a necessary force, and that every natural effect is *so precisely determined* by the energy of its cause that no other effect, in such particular circumstances, could possibly have resulted from it. The degree of every motion is, by the laws of nature, prescribed with such *exactness* that a living creature may as soon arise from the shock of two bodies, as motion, in any other degree or direction than what is actually produced by it (E. 82, my emphasis).

Commenting on the passage, Anscombe argues that, in Hume's thought,

> to say that an event was caused was to say that its occurrence was an instance of some exceptionless generalization…The twist that Hume gave of the topic thus suggested a connection of the notion of causality with that of deterministic laws--i.e. laws such that always, given initial conditions and the laws, a unique result is determined.[46]

Anscombe's interpretation, in a way, draws a close relation between Hume's view of the general character of scientific laws and "covering law" theory. Her interpretation of Hume's view of causal relation to imply a deterministic law according to which, "given initial conditions and the laws, a unique result is determined," reminds us of the "deductive-nomological" model of the covering law theory that we read from Carl Hempel. Tom Beachamp and Alexander Rosenberg defend the connection more explicitly in the last chapter of their book, *Hume and the Problem of Causation.*[47] They argue that "Hume would concur in the broad outlines of the deductive-nomological treatment of explanation (at least as Hempel develops it)."[48] In a later paper, Rosenberg revises his position to involve a claim that Hume *inspired* but did not directly develop a deductive-nomological type of covering law explanation. He writes: "Hume certainly inspired the 'covering law' model of explanation, according to which particular events are explained by deduction from a statement of general laws and initial boundary conditions, and laws are explained by their derivation from more general laws." He then cautions:

> It is important to remember that Hume's account of explanation cannot be identified with the covering law model. Not the least of the reasons for distinguishing Hume's account is the fact that he would insist that scientific explanations be causal, a view that covering law theorists reject. Hume's insistence on this point preserves him from several objections to the covering law model.[49]

I am sympathetic to Rosenberg's account. His revised account is persuasive because there are some features of Hume's account of causal explanation that clearly show that he *inspired* the covering-law model of scientific explanation but did not fully endorse it in the way that we currently read from Hempel.[50] As Donald Livingston calls to attention, the "roots" of two of the fundamental theses of the covering-law model of explanation can be found in Hume's thought about the structure of scientific explanation.[51] They include: (1) *the unity of science thesis*, and (2) *the existence thesis*.[52] The unity of science thesis refers to an interdisciplinary belief in continuity among the natural and social-moral sciences; they all have "the same methodology and the same form of explanation."[53] As I have been arguing, Hume advocated a similar view in his naturalistic project. He sought to unify causal explanations in the social-moral and the natural sciences. He wrote: "there is but one kind of *necessity* as there is but one kind of cause, and that the common distinction betwixt *moral* and *physical* necessity is without any foundation in nature" (T. 171, Hume's emphasis). He defended the same argument in the *Enquiry*: "when we consider how aptly *natural* and *moral* evidence link together and form only one chain of argument, we shall make no scruple to allow that they are of the same nature and derive from the same principles" (E. 90). The existence thesis also holds that "any adequate causal explanation must provide good reasons to believe that the event to be explained occurred rather than did not occur."[54] The thesis is supported by Hume's inductive argument, about which he wrote: "The first question that occurs on this subject is always, *whether* the object shall exist or not. The next, *when* and *where* it shall begin to exist (T. 80).

As Rosenberg's revised position, Livingston also cautions us not to draw the connection between Hume and the nomological covering law theorists too closely. In his view, given that Hume grounded causal relations in inductive inference, it is important to recognize that he was committed to "*inductive-statistical*" explanation rather than *deductive-nomological* explanations.[55] (Livingston's description of Hume's inductive system as "statistical" is misleading. I will discuss the problem shortly.) Livingston distinguishes Hume's inductive explanation from Hempel's D-N covering law explanation based on the nature of the conclusions or generalizations that we infer from them. He thinks deductive-nomological explanations enable us to deduce precise empirical results from deterministic laws. Deductive nomological explanations are "those with strictly universal laws which assert that in all cases in which certain

specified conditions are realized an occurrence of such and such a kind results."[56] In the case of deductive-nomological explanations, together with a statement of initial conditions, laws are *deductively connected* to a description of the event to be explained. By contrast, inductive explanations *induce* empirical results with high inductive probability from inductive laws, along with a statement of initial conditions.[57] Livingston maintains that the difference between the two explanations matches Hume's distinction between causal arguments that amount to "a full proof of the future existence of…[the] event" and "those which amount to a probability" (E. 110; cf. T.124). A basic feature that links Hume to the covering-law model of explanation, according to Livingston's account involves their common identification of the scientific character of an explanation by its "empirical content." Livingston argues: "We may leave aside the question of whether Hume has an adequate account of lawlikeness, for covering-law theory does not depend on any solution to the vexing problem of lawlikeness. All that is required is that covering laws have empirical content which, of course, Hume allows."[58]

The similarities and contrasts that Livingston emphasizes between Hume's and Hempel's theory of explanation in terms of their inductive and deductive characters is impressive. However, his account of the inductive system upon which Hume's theory of causal explanation is founded is misleading. First, it is not entirely correct to identify the inductive system in which Hume's theory of causal explanation is founded as *statistical explanation*. Second, Livingston's account regarding the nature of the generalizations (conclusions) that Hume believed we obtain from inductive explanations is misleading. His account fails to capture Hume's belief that some inductive generalizations (conclusions) are supported by exceptionless (deterministic) evidence. A commitment to inductive regularity form of explanation is not inconsistent with the belief that general laws yield deterministic conclusions, and Hume believed this idea in his causal theory of explanation. I want to revise Livingston's account by clarifying the nature of generalizations that Hume believed we induce from inductive explanations.

Inductive explanations differ from deductive-nomological types of explanations in terms of their logical forms but not by the strength of their supporting evidence and the generalizations that we infer from them. As the names suggest, the divide between the two is by the fact that inductive and deductive-nomological explanations are grounded in inductive and deductive reasonings, respectively. Moreover, whereas deductive-nomological (D-N) types of explanations and their covering laws are supported by evidence that is deductively certain, inductive explanations and their covering laws are supported by probabilistic evidence. As Hempel reminds us, "we may distinguish deductive-nomological from probabilistic explanations by saying that the former effect a deductive subsumption under laws of universal from, the latter an inductive

subsumption under laws of probabilistic form."[59] The laws by which events are explained in the D-N model of explanation are universal laws of the form: "Whenever and wherever conditions of a specified kind F occur, then so will, always and without exception, certain conditions of another kind, G."[60] But, as Hempel points out, "Not all scientific explanations are based on laws of strictly universal form."[61] Generalizations from inductive explanations are, as Hempel identifies them, *"laws of probabilistic form* or *probabilistic laws*, for short."[62] Inductive generalizations are describable as highly probable, but not as absolutely or deductively certain. As Hempel explains:

> while a deductive explanation shows that, on the information contained in the explanans, the explanadum was to be expected with 'deductive certainty', and inductive explanations shows only that, on the information contained in the explanans, the explanadum was to be expected with high probability, and perhaps with 'practical certainty'.[63]

Since generalizations from deductive-nomological types of explanations are deductively certain but generalizations from inductive explanations are probabilistic in nature, it is tempting to distinguish the two kinds of explanations by their evidential strengths and the nature of generalizations that they warrant, but this would be misleading. D-N types of explanations do not differ from inductive explanations by having stronger evidential strengths or conclusions. As Hempel cautions, "the distinction between laws of universal form and laws of probabilistic form does not refer to the strength of the evidential support for the two kinds of statements, but to their form, which reflects the logical character of the claim they make."[64] The nature of their confirming evidence (probabilistic warrant for inductive explanations and deductive certainty for deductive explanations) sufficiently justify or support the reliability and the explanatory efficacy of their respective conclusions (generalizations). This is where Livingston was misled, when he distinguished Hume's inductive explanatory system from Hempel's deductive-nomological type of explanation by arguing that Hume would not endorse Hempel's conception of scientific explanations as supported by "exceptionless regularity." By grounding causal laws of explanation in inductive reasoning, Hume certainly conceived of causal explanations as supported by probabilistic evidence. But he believed that some probabilistic laws of inductive explanations are supported by exceptionless evidence. Two different kinds of probabilistic arguments have to be noted in Hume's scientific thought. Generally, Hume believed that we assess causal beliefs as probable relative to their supporting evidence. The warrant (acceptability) of a probable belief is proportionate to the confirming evidence that supports the belief. Hume wrote:

> There is certainly a probability, which arises from a superiority of chances on any side; and according as this superiority increases, and supposes the opposite chances, the probability receives a proportionable increase and begets still a higher degree of belief or assent to that side, in which we discover the superiority (E. 56).

Between Locke's "demonstrative" and "probable" arguments, Hume identified a third category, proofs that are supported by exceptionless factual evidence.[65] He wrote:

> Mr. Locke divides all arguments into demonstrative and probable. In this view, we must say that it is only probable all men must die, or that the sun will rise to-morrow. But to conform our language more to common use, we ought to divide arguments into *demonstrations, proofs, and probabilities*. By proofs meaning such arguments from experience as leave no room for doubt or opposition (E. 56).

Hume explained in the *Treatise* the exact sense in which inductive proofs differ from ordinary probabilities that lack proofs, as well as demonstrative arguments.

> 'tis however certain, that in common discourse we readily affirm, that many arguments from causation exceed probability, and may be receiv'd as superior kind of evidence. One wou'd appear ridiculous who wou'd say, that 'tis only probable the sun will rise tomorrow, or that all men must dye: tho' 'tis plain we have no further assurance of these facts, than what experience affords us. For this reason, 'twould perhaps be more convenient, in order at once to preserve the common signification of words, and mark the several degrees of evidence, to distinguish human reason into three kinds, viz. *That from knowledge, from proofs, and from probabilities*. By knowledge, I mean the assurance arising from the comparison of ideas. By proofs, those arguments which are derived from the relation of cause and effect, and which are entirely free from doubt and uncertainty. By probability, that evidence which is still attended with uncertainty (T. 124).

In Hume's empiricism, demonstrative reasoning applies only to mathematical knowledge. But for the empirical world that we know by means of sense impressions, our beliefs can only be probable; our beliefs about the empirical world cannot be absolutely certain as mathematical truths are. But Hume identified in the preceding two passages two different kinds of probable beliefs: reliable causal beliefs grounded in probable evidence that cannot be sensibly doubted, and those that are grounded in probable evidence that we cannot prove or be certain of. Hume often described the latter as "mere" or "chanced" probability and counter-distinguished it from causal beliefs that are covered by law, especially uniform or exceptionless regularity. Warranted probability, which Hume often described as "the probability of causes," is evidentially supported by exceptionless regularity (uniformity). "The probability of causes," Hume wrote, are "causes, which are entirely uniform and constant in producing a particular effect; and no instance has ever yet been found of any failure or irregularity in their operation" (E. 57). His examples of causal laws supported by exceptionless evidence include the law of energy ("Fire has always burned" (E. 57)) and the laws of motion and gravity ("The production of motion by impulse and gravity is an universal law, which has hitherto admitted of no exception" (E. 57)). Our belief in the constant operation of the laws of nature, including our generalizations and predictions about the world, involve customary or habitual transference (projection) of our experience of past regularities to the future. "Being determined by custom to transfer the past to the future, in all our inferences;

where the past has been entirely regular and uniform, we expect the event with the greatest assurance, and leave no room for any contrary supposition" (E. 58). The evidence for our generalizations or predictions about the continuous operation of the laws of nature in the future must be proportionate relative to the evidence we had for our belief in a similar regularity in the past. In other words, "when we transfer the past to the future, in order to determine the effect, which will result from any cause, we transfer all the different events, in the same proportion as they have appeared in the past" (E. 58).

As we noted earlier, it must be emphasized that Hume did not believe that exceptionless regularities apply uniformly across all causal events; not all causal regularities are precise or exceptionless. Also, the causal order of nature is not without irregularities. Rather, by an exceptionless law or regularity, Hume spoke to the fact that some regularity, such as the law of gravity, is constant and operates reliably all the time. But it is not all cases of empirical regularities that function uniformly in the exceptionless way all the time. Explanations of empirical phenomena have *ceteris paribus* conditional clauses, and this suggests that physical laws are not exceptionless all the time and in all cases. Hume clarified the issue immediately after stating his belief in the exceptionless character of the laws of motion and gravity: "But there are other causes, which have been found more irregular and uncertain" (E. 57). For example, "rhubarb", in Hume's view, has not "always proved a purge", nor "opium a soporific to every one, who has taken these medicines" (E. 57-58). It is important for the concept of exceptionless regularity not to be confounded with the idea of infallibility or indubitable certainty. As we noted, Hume conceived of indubitable certainty as possible only in mathematical beliefs. Exceptionless evidence that supports probable proofs about causal regularities, such as the laws of motion, are contingent (empirical) regularities and therefore their negation is logically conceivable. As Hume maintained: "Though experience be our only guide in reasoning concerning matters of fact; it must be acknowledged, that this guide is not altogether infallible, but in some cases is apt to lead us into errors" (E. 110). For example, "One, who in our climate, should expect better weather in any week of June than in one of December, would reason justly, and conformable to experience; but it is certain, that he may happen, in the event, to find himself mistaken" (E. 110).

It must also be noted that the falsifiability condition does not demerit the credibility of our beliefs in the reliable operation of the laws of nature. We have a guide for making reliable generalizations and predictions: we proportion our beliefs (including our generalizations and predictions) to the confirmable (or disconfirmable) evidence that we have available. On this, unlike Livingston's claim, it is not entirely true that for Hume inductive or probabilistic generalizations are confirmable (or disconfirmable) statistically (by the number of observed

instances); inductive generalizations are for Hume not really statistical.[66] We may glean this from Hume's argument: "What we have found once to follow from any object, we conclude will forever follow from it; and if this maxim be not always built upon as certain, 'tis not for want of a sufficient number of experiments, but because we frequently meet with instances to the contrary" (T. 131). The exceptionless regularity by which we confirm or disconfirm our causal beliefs and generalizations involves the mean average (net balance) between our experience of constant regularity and contrary evidence against it. Consider Hume's argument:

> A wise man, therefore, proportions his belief to the evidence. In such conclusion as are found on an infallible experience, he expects the event with the last degree of assurance, and regards his past experience as a full *proof* of the future existence of the event. In other cases he proceeds with more caution: He weighs the opposite experiments: He considers which side is supported by the greater number of experiments (E. 111, Hume's emphasis).

Thus, our predictions are highly probable (epistemically warranted) when the observed regularity (confirming instances) highly exceed our experience of contrary evidence. Hume argued:

> All probability, then, supposes an opposition of experiments and observations, where the one side is found to overbalance the other, and to produce a degree of evidence, proportioned to the superiority. A hundred instances or experiments on one side, and fifty on another, afford a doubtful expectation of any event; though a hundred uniform experiments, with only one that is contradictory, reasonably beget a pretty strong degree of assurance. In all cases, we must balance the opposite experiments, where they are opposite, and deduct the smaller number from the greater, in order to know the exact force of the superior evidence (E. 111).

From the foregoing, we see that Hume believed that causal explanatory laws have the character of inductive generalization. But we see also that he believed that inductive generalizations and predictions are sometimes supported by precise and exceptionless evidential regularities, though they are not infallible; not all causal regularities hold uniformly at all times and in all cases. The account questions the credibility of the view that Hume did not advocate regularity theory of law, just because he believed in deterministic or necessary causal relations. From the discussion, we observe that a belief in the regularity theory of law does not compete with the idea that laws are in a way deterministic or exceptionless. The objection is misled by an assumption that we cannot induce deterministic generalizations and predictions from inductive regularity. The assumption is false, judging from Hume's belief that some probabilistic proofs are supported by exceptionless inductive evidence. In the end, the account dissolves the debate whether Hume conceived of causal regularity as deterministic (necessitated) laws or just successive correlation. He believed in both but this is not contradictory: the two are reconcilable. Hume's account suggests that we do not have to choose between the issue whether regularities are deterministic laws or regular

succession. We induce causally necessitated deterministic laws (of the general form "X always produces/causes Y") from our experience and past observation of successive or constant regularity. But it is a mistake to think that the power that determines the mind to induce general inferences is a quality located out there in natural events (or objects). We draw causal inferences by the habit of the mind based on our experience of repetition or constant regularity of causal events. In Hume's words: "The necessary connexion betwixt causes and effects is the foundation of our inference from one to the other. The foundation of our inference is the transition arising from the accustomed union." (T. 165). He continues: "In like manner the necessity or power, which unites causes and effects, lies in the determination of the mind to pass from the one to other" (T. 166). We do draw general conclusions and predictions, though we are induced to do so habitually based on our experience of past repetitions of causal events, but not by inference from logical connection between the events. Our belief in the necessary connection between causal relations and events is psychological (something we naturally or habitually project from our imagination based on our past experience of constant conjunction), not by a deductive logical inference.

We have noted that Hume believed that some natural events are explainable by necessary or deterministic causal laws. We must now examine whether he believed the same about explanations of moral events and actions. Do we explain the causes of human actions, such as the knavish character of a person, by invoking deterministic general laws of human behavior, as we do when we explain the behavior of natural phenomena? In one sense, the continuity that Hume sought between morality and science may be considered as implying the view that Hume believed general laws of morality are exceptionless deterministic generalizations in the same way that he conceived general laws of science. That is, since in developing his naturalistic moral theory, he modeled moral science on the general principles of the empirical sciences, it may seem that Hume believed that general laws of morality and those of the natural sciences have the same degree of generality. I do not think Hume believed that we explain the causes of human acts by invoking exceptionless deterministic general laws of human behavior, in exactly the same way that we do when we explain the behavior of natural phenomena. But I do not think the disparity defeats the success of the continuity thesis upon which he defended his moral science. I want to defend the argument to conclude the discussion, but to avoid trivializing the problem, it is important to examine more closely the issue regarding the possibility of exceptionless deterministic laws in moral explanations.

In Hume's moral science, general moral laws are hypothetical statements, not categorical or deterministic as Kant conceived them. Hume did not conceive of general moral law in the

categorical or exceptionless deterministic sense as he did about some inductive laws of nature, such as the laws of motions. As we noted, deterministic laws are categorical statements of the form "Whenever conditions (or events) of a specified kind E occur, certain conditions (or events) of another kind F will also always occur." A universal statement of this form is analogous to Kant's exceptionless categorical law of morality that says that general laws of morality "must be valid with absolute necessity, and not merely under contingent conditions and with exceptions."[67] Kant's exceptionless categorical law of morality applies absolutely and universally, irrespective of a person's desires and interests. The general law of morality, as Kant put it, "must determine the will without reference to the expected result."[68] By contrast, Hume believed that we are motivated by morality instrumentally relative to our desires and utility expectations. On a typical Humean view, as we shall see in the next chapter, reasons for moral consideration are hypothetical: they depend on the moral agent's motivational tendencies, such as her desires and interests.[69] The account suggests a disparity in Hume's belief about the general character of natural and moral principles. But this does not threaten the success of his moral science (his naturalism about morality).

We may conceive the disparity in Hume's view regarding the general character of moral and scientific claims as a threat to the continuity thesis upon which his moral science is founded only if we conceive of ethical naturalism as a theory that believes in a strict *parity* between morality and science in terms of the objective character of their general conclusions, as David Brink (1989) does. Continuity is not the same as parity. Therefore, Hume's continuity thesis must not be understood to imply a parity argument that draws an identity or strict symmetrical relation between moral and natural scientific laws. As we shall see shortly, his continuity thesis, as contrasted with the parity argument that we read from some ethical naturalists, such as Brink, accommodates differences between the general character of moral laws and scientific laws, and yet believes that they are continuous in terms of their explanatory functions. For an illustration, the continuity thesis upon which Hume's naturalistic ethical theory is founded differs from the parity argument upon which Brink's naturalistic ethical theory is founded. Brink defends naturalism about morality by drawing a strict parity between morality and science in terms of their objective claims; he considers ethical naturalism as a theory about objective moral claims. He asks: "Is ethics or can it be objective in the way that other disciplines, such as the natural and social sciences, are, can be, or seem to be?"[70] Brink defends a realist response against two other positions. According to his realist argument, moral laws and conclusions are as objectively valid as general laws of science are. He defends realism about science and ethics, according to which "the commonsense view about the objectivity of the sciences is roughly right; ethics is or can be

objective in much the same way."[71] He defends his parity argument against: (1) realism about science and antirealism about ethics, an account that conceives a disparity between science and ethics in terms of the objectivity of their general claims; and (2) sophisticated realism (or as he calls it, "global subjectivism and antirealism"), a philosophical view that holds that general conclusions of science as well as ethics are less than objective of the sort that commonsense ascribes to them.[72]

To return to Hume, let me first make the following clarifications about the argument. Though I do not consider a theory about deterministic law as in itself an objective theory, there is a connection between the two. For example, Kant draws a similar connection. We learn from Kant the view that categorical (deterministic) general laws are objective principles that validly apply universally. As he put it, "The categorical imperative [or the universal law] would be one which presented an action as of itself objectively necessary."[73] However, by drawing a connection between exceptionless general laws and objectivity, I do not discount the possibility of someone arguing that, by virtue of the real nature of things, regularities in the world have objective propensities or probabilities to produce certain effects in certain types of situations, without these propensities constituting exceptionless generalizations.[74] I do not purport to deny nor endorse the view whether Hume's belief in exceptionless deterministic inductive regularity commits him to scientific realism. That is, I do not assume (nor deny) that a theory about deterministic laws may be considered as a realist theory. However, I do believe that Hume was not a moral realist who conceived of moral properties as mind-independent objective counterparts of the fabric of the world. I will argue in chapter seven a Humean view that moral values exist in the world as intersubjective values by human construction; objectivity is an intersubjective ideal for Hume.

2.3. *A HUMEAN DEFENSE OF HUME'S CONTINUITY THESIS*

I want to conclude the discussion by suggesting a Humean way by which we ought to understand the relation that Hume sought to establish between his moral science and the other sciences. Hume could hold a different view about the general character of moral and natural scientific generalizations and nevertheless successfully defend continuity between morality and science in terms of their explanatory functions. We may deny continuity between moral and natural scientific explanations if we think we cannot describe and make predictions in the absence of exceptionless deterministic laws of human behavior, but reasoning this way would be misleading. Hume did not really need to hold the same view about the general character of moral and scientific generalizations before he could defend continuity between social-moral and natural scientific inquiries. That is, he did not need to defend strict parity between the general nature of

moral and scientific laws of explanations before he could defend continuity between science and morality. Hume could construe scientific and moral explanations and laws as having different degrees of precision and generality, and yet be able to successfully defend his moral science.[75] As Donald Davidson tells us, "the absence of competent predictive laws does not inhibit valid causal explanation, or few causal explanation could be made."[76] In his view, "it is an error to think no explanation has been given until a law has been produced."[77] He thinks we ask the wrong question when we expect from the social sciences very precise predictions about the behavior of social and psychological phenomena parallel to those found in the natural sciences. But this does not undermine continuity between social and natural scientific inquiries in terms of their explanatory efficacy. Davidson argues:

> ...the social sciences cannot be expected to develop in ways exactly parallel to the physical sciences, nor can we expect ever to be able to explain and predict human behavior with the kind of precision that is possible in principle for physical phenomena. This does not mean there are any events that are in themselves underdetermined or unpredictable; it is only events as described in the vocabulary of thought and action that resist incorporation into a closed deterministic system. These same events, described in the appropriate physical terms, are amenable to prediction and explanation as any.[78]

A Humean may construe Hume's naturalistic argument as a search for "continuity" between moral and scientific theories in terms of their explanatory functions. As we noted in my general introduction in chapter one, Hume held an interdisciplinary view of science; his naturalistic philosophy was founded in his interdisciplinary view of science. This was his way of establishing continuity among the sciences. His comprehensive view of the science of human nature indicates that no single scientific discourse is, independent of the other sciences, complete in itself in providing us with adequate laws to explain the complex dynamics of human nature and its place in the natural order. A complete system of science, on Hume's view, encompasses continuity among all the sciences. Shortly after classifying the natural, social, and human sciences as theories about the science of man, Hume gave an indication that only an interdisciplinary system of science is, in terms of its explanatory efficacy, grounded in a firm foundation. "In pretending therefore to explain the principles of human nature, we in effect propose a compleat system of the sciences, built on a foundation almost entirely new, and the only one upon which they can stand with any scrutiny" (T. xvi). The principles and theories of the different disciplines--the natural sciences (such as physics and biology), the social sciences (such as political science and anthropology), and the humanities (such as morality, history, and natural religion), in their unique ways, provide us with complementary knowledge and understanding of the laws of nature that explain the behavior of natural events and human actions. Though they study different objects,

they all search for knowledge about human nature (conditions) and the natural world in which human beings live and conduct their affairs.

My Humean interpretation of Hume's naturalistic argument to consist in a search for an interdisciplinary science must not be understood as a search for strict unity among the sciences. I do not think that Hume's naturalistic argument is a "reductionist" account that reduces the sciences to a unitary (a single) discourse. Practically, it is impossible to reduce all the sciences to a single discourse; there is multiplicity of sciences.[79] The interdisciplinary science that Hume attempted to establish is based on the common status of the various sciences as empirical discourses with a common explanatory objective. Though they may have various other goals, they all involve the search for knowledge and explanations to deepen our understanding to get around well in this natural scientific world in which we live. Despite their convergence, they may differ since each might be an empirical science of a special kind. For example, biology, physics, and psychology are empirical sciences of different kinds. Hume also wanted to establish the idea that morality is a science of a non-mysterious special kind. This is the logic behind his "reconciling project." The differences involved in the different kinds of the sciences could be explained in terms of their distinctive subject matters. The difference could also be defined by the degree of generality of their explanatory laws. Hume did not need to develop a methodologically rigorous explanatory system of ethics before he could defend his continuity thesis. His continuity thesis involved a defense of "plurality of sciences."[80] On this view, there are different kinds of scientific disciplines; they are distinctively separated by their respective subject matters. Of course, the laws and explanations of the moral and the social sciences could be different in their own distinctive ways and importance. They may explain and account for phenomena in the world (social and moral phenomena) that otherwise could not be accounted for, in their absence. Moral and social phenomena transcend the explanatory limits of the physical sciences. The degree of generality of moral and social laws and explanations is all that is required for a successful study and explanation of social and moral phenomena. The laws and explanations match their subject matter of study.

The explanatory efficacy of a moral and social scientific theory may be just as sufficiently and reliably acceptable as the explanatory efficacy of a natural scientific theory, given the phenomena under their respective fields of investigation. As Edmund Pincoffs (1986) argues, social scientific rules may be less ambitious in precision, yet they are firm enough to be analogous to real laws.[81] Certainly, moral and social scientific theories may explain and predict the behavior of moral and social phenomena under their study with a degree of accuracy and precision quite different from the explanation and prediction that a natural scientific theory may

provide for its study of the behavior of a physical phenomenon. But differences in the degree of accuracy and precision are not a good ground to stand for doubting the explanatory efficacy of the other. We often overrate a natural scientific explanation above explanations that obtain in the social-moral sciences, but we do this misleadingly without taking into consideration the nature of the objects under their respective investigations. A moral or a social scientist may not successfully explain and predict the behaviour of moral and social phenomena if she fails to factor in the beliefs, desires and intentions of the moral and social agent that she is studying. But beliefs and desires are not fixed or deterministic; they are dynamic and they sometimes vary from person-to-person, culture-to-culture, or generation-to-generation. This is why we do not have precise explanations and predictions in the moral and social sciences as we sometimes do in the natural sciences. Also, we may not obtain precise explanation and prediction about desires and beliefs of moral and social actors because we cannot do this by a quantitative calculus that factors *all* relevant beliefs and desires into the equation.

Thus, given the nature of their objects of study, it is true that moral and social scientists are not in position to provide precise laws to explicate and predict the behavior of moral and social phenomena. They cannot categorically say, for example, that whenever a woman has such-and-such beliefs and desires, and such-and-such further conditions are satisfied, she will act in such-and-such a way.[82] For example, no moral scientist can invoke a fixed moral law that vouches with an exceptionless degree of precision that "if the thief wants to steal, then he will steal the wallet if the opportunity exists and no other desire overrides his desire to steal." But a natural scientist can appeal to the law of gravity to predict the precise degree of speed that a body will fall in a vacuum. What we fail to note in our ranking of the natural sciences against the social-moral sciences is the idea that we need the degree of precision and accuracy that we have in the natural sciences as reliable information for the kind of activities and decisions that we undertake about natural scientific matters. Similarly, the degree of explanations and predictions that we have in the social-moral sciences are reliable and sufficient enough for the decisions, choices and planning that we make about moral and social matters. The degree of explanations and predictions we have in the social-moral sciences are reliable and sufficient enough for the moral and other social decisions and choices need to make to navigate and get around successfully in the world that we live. It is wrong to expect more from the moral-social sciences in the exact sense that we have in the natural sciences, given the different nature of the objects of their study. Yet there is continuity between the moral-social sciences and the natural sciences, in terms of the explanatory function and efficacy of their theories relative to their respective subject matters.

Chapter 3

NATURALISM AND NORMATIVITY: A HUMEAN ACCOUNT

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the place of "normativity" in Hume's naturalistic approach to morality. Hume's moral science provides a descriptive account of moral practices. As we noted in the previous discussions, Hume believed that moral inquiries describe the principles and dispositions that causally explain how and why human beings morally behave and think as they do. As we shall see also in the next chapter, Hume believed that we do act and decide in a moral way according to the motivations of our character or psychological (mental) dispositions. So, Hume's naturalism about morality is a descriptive account about moral acts and choices. Though descriptive, I argue in this chapter that Hume's naturalism about morality does not eschew "normativity" from moral considerations; his naturalism has a normative content as well. Though his naturalism alludes to empirical facts about human nature (our psychological dispositions) to describe how and why morally people *do* act and think, his account also provides us with a normative account of how people *ought* to act and make moral decisions. His naturalism about morality believes that normative questions about the way people ought to act and justify their moral decisions and practices are answerable by a consideration of empirical (descriptive) facts about their psychological dispositions. This chapter defends the argument against contemporary claims that Hume's naturalistic theory about motivating reasons for actions undercuts from moral deliberations normative concerns about justifying reasons for actions. I reject the view that Hume's consideration of reasons for actions as prudential or motivating reasons does not provide a plausible account of normative or justifying reasons about how moral agents ought to act.[1] My Humean argument challenges the gulf that some recent scholars, such as Michael Smith (1995) and Jean Hampton (1995), carve between Humean theory of motivating reasons and normative reasons.

3.1. NATURALISM AND NORMATIVITY

"Normativity" is a fundamental concept in philosophical discussions about naturalism, particularly in epistemology and ethics.[2] But, as Alvin Plantinga describes it, there is a "blooming buzzing" confusion about what the term entails.[3] However, one classical and popular application of the term involves issues about justifying reasons that support and explain our epistemic and moral practices. In particular, discussions of normative issues in ethics involve questions about justifying reasons concerning how we ought to act or live.[4] This is the sense in which I will understand the term "normativity" in the discussions in this chapter. To consider whether Hume's naturalism about morality undercuts normative concerns about how we ought to act, let us distinguish two general forms of naturalism: (a) "replacement naturalism" and (b) "reformative naturalism".[5] By my description, replacement naturalism refers to a reductive naturalistic model that eschews altogether traditional concerns about normative considerations regarding how we ought to act, including how we justify the rationality of our actions. In so doing, it seeks to replace normative considerations and restricts moral inquiries to empirical descriptions of how we do act. Replacement naturalism, or as it may also be called, "reductive naturalism", is in line with Quinean naturalistic model that seeks to replace normative concerns by scientific considerations, especially by psychology.[6] The Quinean model is influenced by Quine's effort to reconstruct epistemic considerations, such as normative issues concerning how we ought to arrive at our beliefs and justify them, and cast them "in a new setting and a clarified status," particularly "as a chapter of psychology and hence of natural science."[7]

I reject the identification of Hume's naturalism about morality with the Quinean replacement naturalistic model. Instead of displacing it, Hume's naturalism seeks to reform traditional characterization of morality in terms of normative considerations regarding how we ought to act and rationally justify our moral commitments and practices. That is, Hume's naturalistic model may be better characterized as reformative naturalism. Whereas replacement naturalism seeks to supplant normativity all together, reformative naturalism, by contrast, seeks less to replace normative considerations than it does to *transform* and supplement it.[8] Reformative naturalism is consistent with the naturalistic model that Alvin Goldman defends in epistemology. Goldman, in his *Epistemology and Cognition,* allows traditional normative concepts to prevail, but in a "naturalized" form. He believes that epistemic concepts are legitimately philosophical and traditionally normative, but he thinks normative questions about the possibility of knowledge, that is, whether anybody really knows what she claims to know, and just what cognitive processes are involved, are ultimately a matter that psychologists and cognitive scientists can decide.[9] This naturalistic commitment in epistemology may be extrapolated into ethics to conceive normativity

as a basic ethical ideal that cannot be dispensed with in philosophical considerations of moral requirements. However, normative considerations are issues that cannot be properly addressed without the help of psychological accounts. Reformative naturalism considers psychological descriptions or accounts, such as how we do act, as crucially relevant to how we deal with normative concerns, such as how we ought to act.[10] We may understand the argument by considering the following three basic questions that are at the core of discussions on naturalism in ethics.[11]

1. How ought people to act?
2. How do people act?
3. Do people act the way they ought?

Question 1 is a normative issue that characterizes traditional view of the concerns of moral inquiries. On this view, philosophical reflections on moral issues are restricted to normative concerns regarding how people ought to act. Garrett Cullity and Berys Gaut write: "What ought I to do, How ought I to live? These are the central questions of moral thought; explaining the questions, and delimiting the range of acceptable answers, [are] the tasks of moral philosophy."[12] Call the traditional view "autonomy thesis". On the autonomy thesis, question 2 is a descriptive issue that should be left with psychologists to address. The autonomy of philosophy requires intellectual division of labor: philosophers should restrict their interests to normative issues and leave descriptive or empirical concerns to the empirical sciences, in particular to psychology in regards to issues such as the second question above. Subsequently, on the traditional view, question 3 is moot: philosophical and normative concerns about how we ought to act have nothing to do with, or are independent of, the psychological question regarding how we do act. It is pointless to ask whether descriptive considerations are relevant to answering normative questions, given the alleged divide between descriptive and normative concerns. Conversely, it is irrelevant to ask whether answers to normative questions require descriptive considerations. Normative and descriptive issues belong to two distinct and independent intellectual fields of inquiries. By conceiving moral inquiries as descriptive accounts about human nature, particularly, the connection between our psychological or mental states and our moral motivations or actions, it is tempting to think that Hume's naturalism about morality is restricted to concerns about question 2. This impression is misleading, and it will be rejected in our discussion in this chapter.

We have examined traditional responses to the three questions. Let us now consider a naturalist's response. Naturalists, generally, are not pleased with the traditional autonomy thesis. The different camps within the naturalistic family address the questions differently. Ethical naturalists are divided on the direct bearing that psychology (and science in general) has on normative inquiries, such as moral philosophy. In particular, replacement naturalism and

reformative naturalism differ on their attitudes and responses to question 2 and 3. Replacement naturalism would dismiss question 3, and consider moral problems as concerned with how to answer question 2, given its effort to replace the conception of ethics as a normative institution by psychology, as Quine tries to do to traditional epistemology. But reformative naturalism would argue that we do not adequately address the right ethical problem if we restrict ourselves to question 2. Instead, it would consider an answer to question 1 as only a first step towards answering question 3. Reformative naturalism may consider question 3 as part of the basic ethical problems that attract responses from "scientific-minded" philosophers. Moral inquiries involve an examination of the way people do act and think to raise normative questions about the rational justification (or basis/ground) of their moral practices: do people act the way they ought?[13]

The issue is both a philosophical and psychological problem that requires a corroborative and integrated research effort from philosophical analyses as well as psychological accounts. This task engaged Hume's attention in his concern about the causal connection or influence of our psychological dispositions on our moral decisions and actions. His naturalism about morality involves the study of the mind to describe psychological causes that serve as motivating reasons that explain how and why we act and judge as we do, morally. By these descriptive (causal) facts about human nature, he hoped to accumulate reasons to explain the rational basis of our actions and choices. Thus, to the Humean naturalist, question 1 cannot be plausibly answered independently of question 2; descriptive questions regarding how we do act are relevant, and in fact, indispensable, to answering normative questions about how we ought to act. Descriptive concerns about how people do act and think, morally, have a concomitant bearing on normative questions about how people ought to act and make moral choices (decisions). (The question of *how* this is possible will be addressed later in the discussion.)

3.2. CAUSAL MOTIVATIONS AND REASONS FOR ACTIONS

The notion of "reasons for actions" is at the core of recent discussions whether naturalism about morality accommodates the normative force of moral requirements. The notions of "reasons" and "justifications" are commonly grouped under normative accounts of morality, and they are often contrasted with issues about the "causes," motivations" and "explanations" of actions. My argument that Hume's naturalistic moral theory accommodates normative requirements of morality, requirements such as reasons that justify the rationality of an action, involves a suggestion that Hume's naturalistic approach to morality refutes the classification. In Hume's naturalistic account, the alleged bifurcation between "causes-reasons," which in recent

discussions translate into a distinction between "explanation-justification", breaks down in an insightful way. This section defends the argument.

The problem about Hume's naturalistic approach to morality may be considered in this way. On the critical evaluation of his naturalistic theory, it may be asked: where does his descriptive account leave us with normative advice about reasons for actions? Besides motivating reasons for acting, moral agents must also have normative reasons that provide them with a rational justification for why they ought to act (or not to act) in a given way. It may then be thought that, on the advice of rational reasons for actions, Hume's naturalistic theory of moral motivation seems to be silent. His theory of moral explanation, in a restricted way, seems to limit reasons for moral actions to causal or motivating reasons. But how can this system of morality provide us with a normative advice (which seems to be what morality is supposed to do for us, according to the received view) regarding what we ought to do? As Michael Smith argues, "a theory of motivating reasons is not the whole of a psychological theory" of morality.[14] A theory of moral psychology needs also to tell us normative reasons regarding what is and is not right or best for us to do, but this seems not to be catered for by Hume's naturalistic theory. Subsequently, Hume's theory may be rejected as an inadequate moral theory.

Certainly, it cannot be denied that Hume's naturalistic theory of moral explanation is a theory about motivating reasons that explain the causes of our actions. His naturalistic moral theory is an account about causal connections between mental dispositions and moral motivations. But in his account, motivating reasons have normative contents as well. In Hume's moral system, normative issues about reasons for actions, such as *why* a person behaved as she did, require causal explanations. A normative demand for reasons to justify an action is a request for information regarding why (including how) the action was caused (produced or performed) in a particular way, given other options. Justified moral reasons are, for Hume, claims about motivating reasons that explain the causes of actions. But causes, in his thought, are explanatory reasons.[15] We explain, understand, and justify the intelligibility of an action (how sensible the action is) by showing why the action was caused (by the agent) to happen as it did. The argument may be gleaned from Book II, Section III, Part III of the *Treatise* that Hume titled "Of the influencing motives of the will."[16] In the discussion, Hume defended the view that, in a demand for an explanation, we justify an action by supplying causal accounts. He regarded reasons that moral agents cite to justify their actions as "explanatory concepts."[17] As he asked and explained in one of his arguments, "an action, or sentiment, or character is virtuous or vicious; *why*? *because* its view *causes* a pleasure or uneasiness of a particular kind. In giving a *reason*, therefore, for the pleasure or uneasiness, we sufficiently *explain* the vice or virtue" (T. 471,

emphasis added). An important point in the passage needs to be highlighted. Concepts, such as "why", "because", "causes," "reason", and "sufficiently explain" must be carefully noted in Hume's argument. He considered *"because-statements"* as *"reason-giving"* accounts that we cite to *sufficiently explain why* a given action was caused in a particular way. By sufficiently explaining the cause of an act, we look for reasons to justify the intelligibility (or otherwise) of the act.

The "because-clause" in the passage reveals Hume's consideration of moral reasons as explanatory reasons.[18] We learn from Davidson the view that "because-clause" is a mark of the explanatory character of a reason-giving statement. He writes: "Central to the relation between a reason and an action it explains is the idea that the agent performed the action *because* he had the reason."[19] Because statements provide answers to explain why someone acted as he did. They also provide reasons for explaining why the person's action seems strange to us, outrageous, pointless, out of character or disconnected.[20] "Because" is an explanatory concept. It ties up reasons (explanans) to an explained action (the explanandum).[21] As Hume maintained in the passage, the mark of the explanatory force of a "because-statement" is determined by the extent to which the statement "sufficiently explains" the action in question. A "because-statement" is an answer to a why-question.[22] But why-questions are requests for information and explanations. Therefore, because-statements are causal explanatory statements. Bas van Fraassen is currently best known for the consideration of causal explanations as information seeking accounts. Brian Ellis writes in reference to Fraassen:

> In fact, there are different sorts of theories and explanations which arise as answers to different sorts of questions. I follow van Fraassen in thinking that any request for explanation is a request for information. A *causal explanation* is information about the causal history of something or about the causal processes which result in something. [23]

In recent literature, Donald Davidson advocates the Humean conception of causal motivations as reasons for actions. In his influential paper, "Actions, Reasons, and Causes," Davidson characterizes reasons for actions (which he calls "rationalizations") as causal explanations. He introduces the paper as an attempt "to defend the ancient--and commonsense--position that rationalization is a species of causal explanation."[24] He discusses the relation between reasons and actions by arguing that reasons explain actions by providing an agent with a justification for doing what he did. Davidson thinks we can call a model of this reason-giving explanation "*rationalizations,* and say that the reason *rationalizes* the action."[25] A reason rationalizes an action when it helps us to understand what caused or made a person to act the way she did, features about her action such as what she wanted, believed, desired, held dear, thought dutiful, beneficial, obligatory, or agreeable.[26] A person does something for a reason when it can be shown

that she was in a certain belief state, conjoined with certain "pro attitudes", such as desires and a variety of other moral views (such as social conventions). For example, consider an action whereby a jealous person poisons her rival. We may cite the person's reason or motive for the action to include her desire to harm the rival and her belief that doing so will vindicate her from an agony or an injustice caused by the rival. We may cite these desires and other psychological states of the person as the reasons that explain what caused the agent to act as he did. They are reason-giving answers to why-questions. So, it appears that, reason-given statements are causal and explanatory in nature. This idea underscores Hume's conception of the content of our motivations for actions, such as our desires, the feeling of pleasure or uneasiness, including our belief states, as the psychological causes that provide us with reasons to explain and understand the acts of moral agents. The Humean account rejects distinction between motivating reasons and normative reasons. The account supports the view that motivating and normative reasons for actions are not wholly separable, and this is an insightful idea that needs to be learned from Hume's naturalistic moral theory.

We have noted a Humean view that an explanation of an action requires information that serves as reasons that explain how and why an agent acted as she did. The account suggests that by exploring and reviewing the causal history of the agent and her acts, our actual concern involves a desire and an effort to understand in an intelligible way what caused the agent to act as she did. In Humean naturalistic moral thought, when we try to understand the "reasonableness" (rightness) or plausibility of an action, we look for information that sensibly explains what caused the action to occur as it did. As Donald Davidson argues, "one way we can explain an event is by placing it in the context of its causes, causes and effect form the sort of pattern that explains the effect."[27] By acquiring information or reasons about the history of a person's psychological dispositions and how she acts, we build a solid ground for our normative judgments and assessment of the moral responsibility of the person in question.[28]

3.3. CASUAL EXPLANATIONS AND JUSTIFYING REASONS FOR ACTIONS

The foregoing account supports the view that causal explanations are answers to normative questions, such as justifying reasons regarding why moral agents ought to act (or ought not to act) rationally in a given way. In answering "why-normative" questions, we give reasons to justify why we act the way we ought to, rationally. Put in the converse way, normative puzzles, such as why an agent ought to be rationally motivated to act in a given way also involve requests for explanatory reasons that justify the rationality or intelligibility of the given action. The account leads to the conclusion that explanatory reasons and justifying reasons are, on the

Humean naturalistic account of moral considerations, interconnected. This section examines some rejection of the interconnection that the Humean account draws between rational justification and explanatory reasons for moral motivations.

The notion of "justification" as applied in discussions of normative moral considerations, is an ambiguous term; the term has various interpretations in recent discussions of reasons for actions. Therefore, the specific sense in which I am applying the term needs to be clarified. Normative considerations are issues about justifying reasons for how we ought to act, rationally. As we learn from Goldman, the notion of justification as used in normative considerations is an evaluative or appraisal term. In discussions of action theories, the normative concept of justification is concerned with "substantive conditions", such as reasons or grounds for the rightness of actions.[29] For example, a normative ethical theory, such as a rational choice theory, may cite the instrumental value or utility expectation of an action as reasons that justify the rightness of a given action. It may claim that an action is right if it has a tendency to maximally and efficiently satisfy an agent's (as well as social) utility expectations, such as a person's desires and other ground projects. Normative considerations of this form underscore Hume's recourse to naturalism about morality. As we shall see, his naturalism revises and redefines traditional notions of rational justification of action instrumentally. He describes the rationality of an action in terms of actions' instrumental value, particularly, their efficient maximization of an agent's expected utility. In his naturalistic account of morality, reason or rationality and its normative force ceases to be purely a *logical evaluative* condition for actions. Instead, normative reasons are for him psychological or prudential reasons based on probabilistic reasoning. We cite a person's utility expectations and desires as reasons that rationally justify her actions, in the probabilistic (rather than logical) sense of rational justification.

Davidson supports the Humean belief that explanatory reasons and justifying reasons are interconnected. In what follows, I draw on his account to clearly explain the exact sense in which explanatory and justifying reasons are interconnected; I will then examine objections from anti-Humean camps. In support of the Humean account, Davidson argues that "justifying and explaining an action so often go hand in hand."[30] Davidson explains that "we frequently indicate the primary reason for an action by making a claim which, if true, would also verify, vindicate, or support the relevant belief or attitude of the agent.[31]" He illustrates the argument this way. Assuming I enter my room and flip the switch to turn on the light, but unknown to me, I also alert a prowler to indicate that I am home. In this series of events, my primary reason for flipping the switch was my desire or intention to turn on the light; the fact that I alerted the prowler that I am home is a secondary matter.[32] On Davidson's view, the desire to turn on the light, supported by

the belief that I can do this by flipping the switch, is the primary reason that not only explain but also "rationalizes" (i.e., rationally justifies) my action.[33] This observation leads him to defend the stronger view that "the justifying role of a reason …depends upon the explanatory role" of the reason.[34] Michael Woods also believes that normative and motivating reasons are interconnected. In Woods' view, "the concept of a reason for an action stands at the point of intersection…between the theory of the explanation of actions and the theory of their justifications."[35] By this, he implies the view that reasons for actions have both explanatory and justification dimensions.

Michael Smith (1995) rejects the belief that explanation and justification of the rationality of an action are interconnected. In response to Woods' account, Smith argues that the notion of reasons for actions may be defined by the two dimensions of explanation and justification only in a loose sense. Smith accepts the view that the concepts of explanation and justification provide reasons to account for the intelligibility of an action, because there is a conceptual connection between citing an agent's reasons for acting in a certain way and making her acting in that way intelligible.[36] Smith agrees also that the term "reasons for actions" is ambiguous, and that it can be defined either in the explanatory or justification senses. However, he rejects the idea that the two go hand-in-hand. On his argument, an emphasis on the one naturally downplays the other. According to his argument, the notions of normative and motivating reasons are "two quite different concepts of a reason for action depending on whether we emphasize the explanatory dimension and down play the justificatory, or *vice versa*".[37] According to his illustration, "'A has a reason to ϕ'…may be a claim about a *motivating* reason A has, when we emphasize the explanatory dimension and downplay the justificatory, or a claim about *normative* reason A has, when we emphasize the justificatory dimension and downplay the explanatory."[38] On Smith's position, the justification or normative sense is weightier and rationally plausible than causal explanatory accounts or motivating reasons, as far as issues of reasons for actions are concerned.

Smith's objection to the idea that motivating and normative reasons are interconnected forms part of his rejection of Humean theory of normative reasons. He defends the objection in his "Anti-Humean Theory of Normative Reasons."[39] He finds *Humean theory of motivating reasons* illuminating, but he rejects *Humean theory of normative reasons*. In the positive sense, Smith considers Humean theory of motivating reasons as an expression of "a simple but important truth about the nature of motivating reasons, a truth that anti-Humeans have failed to appreciate."[40] Attracted by the Humean theory of motivating reasons, Smith rejects Brink's objection to Humean theory of motivating reasons. He thinks Brink's arguments are misdirected. On his view, Brink's

argument holds more appropriately against Humean theory of normative reasons, but not against Humean theory of motivating reasons.

Brink's rejection of Humean theory of moral reasons for actions involves a defense of an externalist theory against an internalist theory of moral considerations. His rejection of internalism about morality involves a criticism of a conceptual connection that he thinks Humeans draw between reasons for actions and moral motivations. His arguments insist that there is a conceptual gap between moral reasons and motivations for actions. On his view, having a motive or desire to do something and having a reason for doing that thing are two separate things. In defending his argument, he calls to attention two different senses of reasons for actions: *explanatory* and *justifying* reasons. According to his argument, having an explanatory reason for an action, that is, a moral agent's ability to supply an explanation for her moral behaviour, is not the same as having good or justifying reasons for that action.[41] He thinks an internalist moral theory, such as that of Hume, which draws an intrinsic or a conceptual connection between psychological motives, such as desires and other pro-attitude psychological states, and moral actions, does not, in the philosophical sense, supply any justifying reasons for moral considerations. According to his externalist theory, justifying reasons can only be facts that are amenable to objective validation independent of our psychological desires.

Brink fleshes out his objection to Humean theory of moral motivation by the view that an internalist moral theory cannot accommodate the possibility of "amoralism." For the internalist, according to Brink's amoralist argument, "it must be conceptually impossible for someone to recognize a moral consideration or assert a moral judgment and remain unmoved."[42] Thus, on Brink's criticism, "internalism makes *the amoralist* conceptually impossible."[43] An amoralist is, by Brink's definition, a moral skeptic who accepts the existence of moral reasons and concedes that we have moral knowledge, yet he questions why we should care about morality.[44] This may be contrasted with someone who is skeptical about the existence of objective moral reasons or the possibility of moral knowledge. Brink employs the argument of amoralism to attack moral internalism as holding a mistaken view of the connection between morality and motivation, including reasons for actions. Though he identifies different species of internalist theories about morality, he thinks all internalist moral theories are mistaken about their implicit denial of the idea that an amoralist can be indifferent to moral considerations.[45] His illustration is that, although rare, some psychological deviants, such as a "sociopath," do not care about what they regard as moral considerations.[46] This leads Brink to conclude that internalism overstates the connection between morality and motivation. It not only holds moral theories hostage to agents' desires, but also it cannot accommodate the possibility of

amoralist and her challenges, except by what Brink regards as untenable explanations that all such people are irrational or suffer psychological maladjustment.[47]

Brink's rejection of the Humean view of the interconnectedness of normative and motivating reasons is based on a conceptual gap that he finds between normative reasons and moral motivations. As Brink uses the sociopath for his illustration, the alleged gap is supported by counterfactual cases where some moral agents fully know well and accept that they have justifying or normative reasons for not doing things (sometimes in a certain way) and yet go ahead to do them. The issue is really a deep moral problem, especially for any naturalistic account that tries to bridge (or deny) the gap between normative and motivating reasons. It is not strange then that in response to the problem, Smith agrees with Brink that amoralism is a fundamental moral challenge.[48] To illustrate the fundamental nature of the problem, Smith cites cases of psychological compulsions, physical addictions, and emotional disturbances to remind us of the view that motivating reasons may, in a given circumstance, come apart from normative or justifying moral claims that we sincerely endorse.[49] That is, Smith, like Brink, believes in a conceptual split between having justifying reasons for actions and being motivated by those reasons, though he defends the argument from quite a different perspective.[50]

Smith construes the problem that Brink raises about Humean theory of reasons for actions as a philosophical dogma created by Humean theory of normative reasons. However, he believes that the problem can be mitigated, if we adopt an anti-Humean stance on issues about normative reasons. He writes: "The Humean claims that motivating reasons are constituted by desires and means-end beliefs. I have argued we have good reasons to accept this claim."[51] Smith then distances his Humean theory of motivating reasons from a commitment to Humean theory of normative reasons. He argues: "Notwithstanding our earlier defense of the Humean theory of motivating reasons, my own view is that we should not accept Humean theory of normative reasons. We should rather accept a radically *anti*-Humean theory."[52] On the Humean theory of motivating reasons that Smith finds attractive, a person is motivated in the right way if her action was causally motivated by the collaboration and presence of the appropriate (relevant) kinds of desire and belief.

Let us consider how Smith specifically rejects Humean theory of normative reasons. He predicates his rejection of the normative component of Humean theory of reasons for actions on the view that Humean theory of motivating reasons captures only a narrow part of psychological theory of moral reasons. On his view, alongside motivating reasons, we need also to distinguish normative reasons. Besides telling us our motivating reasons for actions, Smith thinks a theory of moral psychology ought also to "tell us about those of our normative reasons which express norms of rationality or reason as well."[53] That is to say, a moral theory ought to advise us about "what it is and

is not rational for us to do."[54] One should notice Smith's move towards a rationalist theory of reasons for actions. His criticism of Humean theory of normative reasons is motivated by his belief that it does not go far enough to prescribe rational reasons that ideally (fully) rational agents ought to have to do what they are rationally required by morality to do. Consider his argument, in reference to the platitudes of normative reasons. "The platitude tells us that what it is desirable for us to do is what we would desire that we do if we were fully rational."[55]

Smith's anti-Humean rationalist theory of normative reasons endorses Kantian theory of practical reason. This theory grounds rational moral requirements in a possible, rather than an actual, moral conditions (circumstances) in which a fully rational agent can critically evaluate and determine what she ought rationally to do. Compare this Kantian view of the requirement of practical reason to Smith's position as expressed in the following passage, which is a continuation of the preceding passage I quoted earlier in reference to normative platitudes.

> The platitude… tells us that what is desirable for us to do in certain circumstances--let's call these circumstances the 'evaluated possible world'--is that we, not as we actually are, but as we would be in a possible world in which we are fully rational--let's call this the 'evaluating possible world'--would want ourselves to do in those circumstances.[56]

On the rational advice of moral requirements, Smith thinks Humean theory of normative reasons fails. By contrast to the rigorous requirement of Smith's rational theory of normative moral reasons, the Humean theory of normative reasons that Smith rejects refers to the normative version of instrumental theory of practical reason. According to the Humean theory of normative reasons, "the rational thing for an agent to do is simply to act so as to optimally satisfy her desires."[57] This normative version of Humean instrumental theory of practical reason should be understood quite differently from the motivating version of Humean instrumental theory whose task does not involve an attempt to advise us regarding "the rational thing to do," as expressed in the preceding formulation of the normative version. Smith believes that, on the motivating version of the Humean theory, the end that we attempt to maximally realize is determined not by the advise of rationality, but by sensibility manifested as desires. Thus, it turns out that Smith does not see Hume as failing to distinguish between normative and motivating reasons; he just does not find Hume's account of normative reasons acceptable. So, let us turn in the next discussion to examine his account of Hume's view of normative reasons.

Fundamentally, Smith's rejection of Humean theory of normative reasons is grounded in a widely held belief that in Hume's moral thought, we cannot rationally deliberate and critically examine the objects of our desires. Regarding the issue of normative reasons, "Hume's own view," according to Smith, "is that whereas our beliefs can be rational or irrational, our desires, which cannot be assessed in these terms at all, are beyond rational criticism altogether."[58] Smith

holds that Hume rejected rationalists' view that our ends or desires ought to be critically examined before acting on them. On this view, Hume considered the rationality of an action as determined solely by the efficient *means* of realizing our goals or desires, whatever they may be. The standard objection is that Hume designed his naturalistic theory to replace rationalistic theory of normative reasons by motivating or prudential reasons. That is, the objection that his naturalistic theory does not recognize reasons for actions as normative is defended by reference to his criticism of rationalistic moral system and his effort to reformulate it in naturalistic terms.[59]

The objection may be defended by an argument that, in developing his naturalistic theory, some of Hume's comments about the motivating function of reason cut out normative reasons completely from morality. The alleged Humean problem about normative reasons seems to be validated, for example, by his familiar remark that "reason is the…slave of the passions" (T. 415). The problem seems to be also supported by his remarks in some of his other popular passages, such as his claim that:

> 'Tis not contrary to reason to prefer the destruction of the whole world to the scratching of my finger. 'Tis not contrary to reason for me to chuse my total ruin, to prevent the least uneasiness of an *Indian* or person wholly unknown to me. 'Tis as little contrary to reason to prefer even my own acknowledg'd lesser good to my greater, and have a more ardent affection for the former to the latter. (T. 416).

The remarks in the two passages are the standard source of reference to the view that Hume was skeptical about practical reasons for actions. Besides the criticism we have noted from Smith, Christine Korsgaard also dwells, principally, on the passages to identify Hume's theory of practical reasons as "motivational scepticism." By this she refers to Hume's "doubt about the extent to which human action is or could possibly be directed by reason."[60] From the view that he was skeptical about practical reason, it is believed that by restricting practical reason purely to an instrumental role, Hume not only obstructed reason from determining ends, but also denied reason of the authority to adjudicate, classify, and order the reasonableness of the objects of our desires.[61] In developing the criticism, some anti-Humeans argue that Hume's theory is both counterintuitive and self-defeating. According to Adrian Piper,

> Historically, the view, prevalent in contemporary economics and decision theory as well as philosophy, that rational action consists simply in satisfying one's desires, what ever they may be, as efficiently as possible, is to be found first in Book II of Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature*. This view has counterintuitive and self-refuting implications, in that it recognizes as rational behavior that may reveal a clear degree of irresponsibility or psychological instability.[62]

Piper cites examples to bolster the counterintuitive implications that she finds in Hume's instrumentalist theory of practical reason. Her examples include cases of final ends that, on her

view, obviously seem intuitively irrational but which Hume's theory would present as an object that ought to be pursued and maximally realized. Piper's counterexamples are interesting. The cases include Rawl's unusually skillful and intelligent neurotic man who, in his neurotic aversion to human fellowship, sets up as his ultimate ambition of life of doing nothing but enjoyment of counting blades of grass.[63] Piper outlines the second and third counterexamples in the following passage.

> Another might be the system of final ends embraced by the late Howard Hughes in his last years: to maintain a permanently narcotic-induced state of drugged semi-awareness, watch old movies continually, remain permanently isolated from all human contact in a bed in a dark, dirty room sealed permanently against light and fresh air, and accumulate vast quantities of land and money. A third might be to spend one's evenings howling at the moon.[64]

Naturally, the confusion regarding Hume's position on the place of normative reasons in morality must be expected, given the fuzzy character of his remarks about the role of reason in moral actions. The passage in the *Treatise* in which Hume remarked that "'tis not contrary to reason to prefer the destruction of the whole world to the scratching of my finger" (T. 416) is a typical example of his fuzzy assertions. But we need to take a step back and examine carefully whether it is really fair and accurate to draw from his moral theory the alleged view that, in Hume's moral thought, we are justified in pursuing any object of our desires, *whatever they are*. On closer reading, I think Hume's remarks may be problematic on other grounds, but the attribution to him the idea that we are justified in pursuing any object of desires, *whatever they are* (even if horrendous), is misleading. The objection does not fully capture Hume's "skepticism" about rationalists' account of the justification ground of our moral convictions. Hume was skeptical about the strict logical sense in which the rationalists describe the warranted basis of causal and moral beliefs, but it is misleading to take his argument for the view that we cannot rationally evaluate and justify our beliefs by any other means. Contrary to the widely held belief, it can be shown that Hume has a theory of rational belief.[65]

It may be correct to say that Hume rejected normative theory of rational belief, if Hume were a "Pyrrhonean" skeptic, that is, a global doubt that we cannot rationally believe in anything. According to the Pyrrhonean skeptic, all beliefs are devoid of rational support, and therefore no belief is rational.[66] No doubt, Hume's naturalism is founded in his scepticism about rationalist's method of reasoning. But it is tempting to over-stretch his scepticism to imply a radical claim that we cannot entertain a rational belief in anything. Some critics acknowledge that Hume accorded beliefs a role in his moral system, nonetheless they argue that the notion of belief for Hume has no rational or normative meaning. The argument is often supported by Hume's naturalistic claim

that our belief-acceptance is induced by our habitual sentiments. This naturalistic conviction is understood to imply the claim that our beliefs are bereft of rational support.[67] In Richard Pokin's view, Hume's skepticism aims at showing that our beliefs are devoid of any rational support."[68] David Pears also attributes to Hume the view that "reason cannot defend the principles which we need to steer us through our lives, and so nature takes over and engraves them on our minds."[69] The account that Hume's naturalism grounds both causal and moral beliefs in sentiments is a correct view, but it understates the central place that Hume accorded beliefs in his naturalistic theory and the particular kind of sentiments in which he grounded our evaluative judgments about reasons for moral actions. In chapter four, I will distinguish between "second-order" evaluative reflective sentiments and "first-order" primitive sentiments and defend the view that Hume grounded our moral beliefs and judgments in evaluative reflections but not in our primitive instincts. My present discussion is restricted to a rejection of the view that in Hume's naturalistic system, we cannot rationally assess and justify our moral beliefs and other normative commitments.

To begin with, it must be acknowledged that Hume agreed with the Pyrrhonean that we cannot rationally justify our beliefs in the logical sense of rational justification, since all our beliefs are causal (or experiential). But it is not often recognized that Hume rejected the Pyrrhonean claim that rationality requires of us to give up our beliefs since they cannot be logically validated. Hume alluded to our ordinary epistemic practices to call attention to the view that, strictly speaking, beliefs lack rational justification, we nevertheless continue to believe since such normative attitude is part of our being as natural entities. For Hume, "we are creatures of nature, not reason."[70] This is what led him to adopt the naturalistic conviction that, since we do not believe on strict logical grounds, we do so on another ground, such as custom and habit. Hume's position here opens the door for misleading interpretations of his position on normative issues regarding rational assessments of moral beliefs and judgments. One may be misled to take Hume's claim that we believe on habit as implying the view that our beliefs cannot *in any way* be rationally evaluated. The widely held claims that Hume believed that we cannot rationally justify our normative commitments fail to take into account his defense of what he called "Academic Skepticism" against Pyrrhonism.[71] Hume developed his naturalistic account against the Pyrrhonean claim that we live on skeptical principles without beliefs. Instead, Hume argued that if we follow the Pyrrhonean principle strictly to renounce belief altogether, we cannot act at all: "All discourse, all action would immediately cease; and men remain in a total lethargy, till the necessities of nature, unsatisfied, put an end to our miserable existence" (E. 128). He supported this idea by his famous dictum: "Nature is always too strong for principle;" human beings "must

act and reason and believe" (E. 128). Let me underscore the idea that, in his remarks about the view that our beliefs are not warranted by rational principles, Hume referred particularly to the idea that our beliefs are not rationally justified on strict logical grounds. But this does not imply that we cannot rationally believe; as he says in the passage, in practical terms, we cannot do but "must act and reason and believe." By the necessity of nature, especially, by the practical possibility of social relations and transactions, we do believe and judge, despite that we do not do so by validating them on strict logical reasoning. As Hume put it in the *Treatise*, "Nature, by an absolute and uncontroulable necessity has determin'd us to *judge* as well as to breathe and feel" (T. 183, my emphasis). As we noted in chapter two, for Hume, all our beliefs are causal or experiential and are therefore validated by probabilistic reasoning.

By arguing that we cannot live without believing, Hume did not only reject Pyrrhonean global renunciation of belief, but rejected also its claim that any belief is unreasonable. Hume saw his argument as consistent with the principles of what he called "Academic Skepticism," a position that he clearly discussed in his *Enquiry Concerning Human understanding*. Whereas the Pyrrhonean attempts to suspend judgments on all matters and live without belief, Hume adopted an Academic skeptical stance to argue that, though we do not know with demonstrative proof, we do have probabilistic proofs.[72] We rationally believe on probabilistic proofs, not strictly on logical or demonstrative reasoning. The importance of his Academic scepticism consists in the avoidance of "dogmatism" and the recognition of the value of academic doubt or suspension of belief to a certain degree, in the absence of demonstrative proof of our practical beliefs. His Academic skepticism recognizes the limited realm in which reason operates in both our scientific and moral lives in the empirical world in which we live. We resist yielding to the credulity, pretense and arrogance of the dogmatist by confining our confidence in the power of reason "to very narrow bound...of the understanding, and ...renouncing all speculations which lie not within the limits of common life and practice" (E. 41). Hume's argument rejects the concept of reason as understood in the traditional Aristotelian and Cartesian sense of *scentia*.[73] That is to say, we have no infallible light of reason that takes us beyond the realm of ordinary experience to the objective necessities and essences of things. As Fred Wilson puts it:

> If we believe, we believe on grounds other than those of Aristotelians and the rationalists. The understanding of which Hume speaks as producing belief is not the understanding of dogmatists. The very fact that Hume here speaks of the 'understanding' should make it clear that, while he is attacking reason in the traditional sense, he is also committed to the rationality of human being, that is, to human beings having reason in some other sense. It is a reason that yields probabilities rather than *scientia*.[74]

Hume's academic scepticism that revises the traditional conception of the power and limits of reason, including the justification ground of our beliefs, supports his reformative naturalism. He endeavored to reform traditional view of rationality (and other normative commitments) that he found to be "dogmatic" and placed it in a scientific foundation, that is, in probabilistic experiential ground. What needs to be noted is that, in his debate with rationalistic philosophers, Hume was influenced by his naturalistic philosophical thought to redefine the function of reasons instrumentally, in both motivating and normative senses. I turn in the next section to defend this view.

3.4. INSTRUMENTAL THEORY OF PRACTICAL REASON

The fulcrum of the objections to the Humean view that motivating and normative reasons for actions are interconnected is the idea that Hume rejected the view that we ought to critically examine the objects of our desires before pursuing them. The objection implies that Hume saw the normative as wholly reducible to non-normative causes; he restricted the normative to simple prudential estimations. To critically examine the objection, let us sort out in a systematic order what the theory of practical reason for actions really entails. Three general species of the theory are implicit in the argument.

(1) Kantian non-instrumental theory of practical reasons. This theory derives from Kant's claim that morality is motivated unconditionally by pure rational will (a will that is not contaminated by any desire).

(2) Kantian instrumental theory of practical reason. This doctrine is grounded in Kant's hypothetical imperative. (We shall see what it involves shortly).

(3) Humean instrumental theory of practical reason.

In the discussion, rejections of Humean theory of practical reason involve, at least, three groups: (a) Those who agree that Humeans have both normative and motivating reasons, but the normative version is problematic. This was Smith's argument. (b) Those who maintain that Humeans do not have a theory of practical reasons (neither the instrumental nor the non-instrumental forms). Jean Hampton is behind this argument. (c) Those who restrict Humean theory of practical reason to only motivating (means-ends) reasons. Adrian Piper's objection is example. My response will focus on (a). My argument will involve a Humean attempt to show that Hume's naturalistic moral theory, in a non-problematic way, redefines practical reason instrumentally in both motivating and normative senses. This may appear as an argument restricted to rebutting Smith's objection, but I intend it to apply also against (b) and (c). If I succeed in showing that Hume, in a non-problematic way, has a theory of normative and

motivating instrumental reasons, Hampton's denial that Hume has a theory of practical reason would be also rejected, even if implicitly. The same rebuttal would hold against Piper's claim that Hume's instrumental theory of practical reason is counterintuitive. What makes my argument a three-edged sword against the three objections involves its rejection of their shared fundamental assumption that, in Hume's moral system, we cannot criticize and order the objects of our desires, whatever they may be.[75]

Except for Hampton and Brink, it is not disputed in the debate that Hume, in developing his naturalistic moral system, redefined the function of practical reason in terms of its instrumental role. That is, the critics are right that Hume assigned reason an instrumental function in his moral theory. Hume accepted orthodox definition of the theoretical function of reason as a computational device for finding out truths and falsehoods. But he was led by his scientific way of looking at things to redefine the practical function of reason and characterize it as a "technological" cognitive instrument for engineering efficient means of optimizing and realizing our ends. Hume assigned to reason an important instrumental task to perform in his naturalistic theory of moral explanation. This involves reason's practical function of counseling us regarding *effective means* of realizing and maximally achieving our desired (and designed) projects. On this Humean account, practical reason functions instrumentally in, at least, discovering the effective means of optimally achieving our goals or welfare. On this view, Adrian Piper is right in calling to attention the idea that "Hume's conception of reason is a hierarchically-structured series of means to the ends we adopt."[76]

Hume classified the function of reason into three integrated hierarchical categories: abstract or demonstrative reasoning which involves comparative analysis of non-empirical or abstract ideas, such as mathematical concepts, probabilistic and causal reasonings involving proofs of empirical facts, such as causal relations and events.[77] Piper stipulates the means-ends integrated structure of abstract, probabilistic, and causal reasonings in the following way.[78] "[F]or Hume, abstract reasoning is a means to probabilistic reasoning; probabilistic reasoning is a means to the rational manipulation of empirical conditions, and this in turn is the means to the objects of our desires."[79] From this integrated hierarchical structure, Piper concludes that "Hume not only accepts the traditional view of reason as essentially inference and calculation, but also, apparently, the positive utility-maximization" model of rationality, according to which "rationality is a purely theoretical or logical capacity which consists in ascertaining, through investigation and calculation, the most efficient means possible of achieving our desired final ends."[80] A problem with Piper's account is that she is not clear regarding where the theoretical function of reason ends and where the practical function begins; she conflates the two.

Hume, in a number of places, both in the *Treatise* and in the *Enquiry,* spoke directly to the idea that reason functions as a means-end cognitive instrument by informing us of the causal results of pursuing a given object of desires as well as the efficient means of attaining them. Observe the following passage from the *Treatise*.

> 'Tis obvious, that when we have the prospect of pain or pleasure from any object, we feel a consequent emotion of aversion or propensity, and are carry'd to avoid or embrace what will give us this uneasiness or satisfaction. 'Tis also obvious, that this emotion rests not here, but making us cast our view on every side, comprehends whatever objects are connected with its original one by the relation of cause and effect. Here then reasoning takes place to discover this relation; and according as our reasoning varies, our actions receive a subsequent variation (T. 414).

We learn from Hume in the passage the idea that we are carried to pursue or avoid the objects of our desires *according to the direction or variation of reason*. This claim about the instrumental function of reason is echoed more explicitly in another passage in Book III, Section I of the *Treatise*.

> [R]eason, in a strict and philosophical sense, can have an influence on our conduct…after two ways: Either when it excites a passion by informing us of the existence of something which is a proper object of it, or when it discovers the connexion of causes and effects, so as to afford us *the means* of exacting any passion (T. 459; emphasis added).

If reason "excites a passion by informing us of the existence of something which is a proper object of it, or when it discovers the connexion of causes and effects," as Hume tells us in the passage, I am puzzled why it does not provide us with any advise regarding the right object that is reasonable and worthwhile pursuing? Let me leave this matter aside for a while and for now focus on Hume's view of the motivating instrumental function of practical reason. Were the passages on Hume's view of instrumental function of practical reason from the *Treatise* merely casual or accidental remarks, Hume would have corrected them when rewriting the *Treatise* as *Enquiry* to obtain publicity and readership for it. Yet the instrumentalist passages in the *Enquiry* even emphasize more strongly Hume's conception that, in corroboration with our humanity (human sentiment), reason functions as means-ends maximizing motivating instrument. Consider the following passage.

> [R]eason, when fully assisted and improved, be sufficient to instruct us in the pernicious or useful tendency to a certain end;… and were the end totally indifferent to us, we should face the same indifference to the means….[R]eason instructs us in the several tendencies of actions, and *humanity* makes a distinction in favour of those which are useful and beneficial" (E. 286).

Certainly, being merely an informative device, reason by itself lacks motivational efficacy to incline us into action. Nevertheless, Hume conceived reason as the mechanism that calls to our

attention the means by which we optimize and realize true happiness or avoid miseries. "Reason being cool and disengaged, is no motive to action, and directs only the impulse received from appetite or inclination, by showing us the means of attaining happiness or avoiding misery" (E. 294). The passages clearly and explicitly reveal that Hume actually believed that reason is indispensably required in all decisions about moral actions. On his view,

> One principal foundation of moral praise being supposed to lie in the usefulness of any quality or action, it is evident that *reason* must enter for a considerable share in all decisions of this kind; since nothing but this faculty can instruct us in the tendency of qualities and actions, and point out their beneficial consequences to society and their possessor (E. 285).

Hampton, in her criticism, acknowledges many of the above passages. Nevertheless, she insists on her rejection of the idea that Hume has no theory of instrumental practical reason. She refuses to recant, despite her acknowledgment, because of her conviction that Hume allowed no means by which actions can be rationally criticized as irrational. In my view, the problem has to do with how to deal with Hume's claims that actions can be more appropriately described as "laudable or blamable; but they cannot be reasonable or unreasonable" (T. 458). On this, I agree that Hume went overboard. Certainly, it is hard to accept why a blamable action cannot be said to be an unreasonable action. But given the means-ends instrumental function that Hume assigned for reason, Hampton is certainly wrong about her categorical claim that Hume did not have an instrumental theory of practical reason. Hampton's problem is that she does not count the means-ends function as part of the instrumental task of practical reason. She restricts the instrumental function of practical reason to only reason's overriding task of telling us the good (ends) that are rationally required to be pursued. But this restriction, in my view, leaves out an equally important task of practical reason: the determination of not only the efficient means of realizing the good, but also the motivating incentives for doing so. This recognition by Hume makes him provide us with an insightful scientific account of the practical function of reason. His redefinition of the practical function of reason instrumentally fits in consistently with his effort to reconstruct morality plausibly on scientific foundation.

Hume's redefinition of reason instrumentally involved an effort to provide a scientific account of the role of rational justification in the explanation of moral decisions and actions. Supplying reasons to justify the rationality of an action, on the Humean theory, requires providing reasons to show the effective means of optimizing and maximally realizing one's ground projects. Thus, Humean instrumental account provides a scientific definition of the concept of practical reasons. Comparatively, Humean instrumental account of reason seems more scientific and reflective of commonsense view than the Kantian non-instrumental version.[81] By accounting for the moral

worth of an object of our desires in terms of its instrumental value in efficiently realizing our welfare, the Humean theory accords reason no "occult" powers, so to speak, as the Kantian version does.[82] To the Humean, it is superfluous to ascribe to reason a special insight or access to our final ends, independent of their instrumental values. No scientific break-though, on the Humean view, can provide us with any special access to capture the intrinsic goodness of our desires, independent of their instrumental value. As Hampton, in agreement with John Mackie, acknowledges,

> how does a scientific world view permit us to believe that there are unmotivated ends which we are rationally compelled to pursue? Science, after all, does not recognize such objects or properties with inherent prescriptive power....Moreover, no scientific description of human beings has identified a rational capacity within us that can determine these objects, respond to their inherent prescriptivity, and motivate action in compliance with their requirement.[83]

Scientifically, Hume, in his commitment to a naturalistic account of human nature, found a non-instrumental view, and the non-natural role that it ascribes to reason, unacceptable.[84] In his naturalistic moral theory, Hume developed an instrumental theory that provides an account of reason that is more acceptable from the standpoint of science than a non-instrumental theory. Since the beliefs and desires that constitute its experimental data are naturalistic phenomena, the instrumental theory is a naturalistic theory that provides a realistic scientific account about reasons for actions.[85] By contrast, in virtue of tracing the source of causal motivations of actions to non-natural phenomena (that is, to the authority of reason itself, instead of, say, the manifestations of human nature, such as desires), non-instrumental theory of reason is non-scientific and unrealistic about the cognitive limits of practical reason.

Now, is Humean instrumental theory of practical reason a theory about motivating or normative reasons, or both? It is not directly clear in discussions of reasons for actions whether the instrumental theory of practical reason is a theory of motivating reasons, normative reasons, or whether the latter two are just twin dimensions of the same theory.[86] The integrated version is what Hume advocated in his naturalistic moral theory. But on prevailing discussions, the instrumental theory of reasons turns out to be restricted to motivating reasons, if construed in Humean terms. That is, the instrumental theory of practical reason is a theory of motivating reasons, if understood as an instrument for the effective determination and realization of our welfare optimization.[87] As we have seen, Smith positively endorses the motivation dimension of Humean instrumental theory of practical reasons, and rejects its normative component.[88] The irony, however, is that the theory of instrumental reasons turns out to be a theory of normative reasons, only when construed in Kantian terms. This is why, in the search for normative justifying reasons to complement his Humean theory of motivating reasons, Smith switches from Humean to become a Kantian. Jean Hampton advocates Kantian instrumental theory of practical reason to displace the Humean version. She identifies

instrumental and non-instrumental kinds of Kantian theory of normative reasons. She identifies the non-instrumental kind with what she describes as "Kant's larger, non-instrumentalist conception of rationality."[89] This account is supported by Kant's view that when we act morally, our actions are motivated by the authority of reason. By contrast, Hampton argues that Kantian instrumental theory of normative reasons, the "non-moral component of reason, from which we act when we are motivated by hypothetical imperatives," is distinguishable from Humean type of hypothetical imperatives.[90]

On the Kantian type, Hampton argues that it is not desires (as the Humeans claim) but instrumental reason that motivates us when we act (non-morally) from a hypothetical imperative. This is supported by the Kantian view that it is not desires but (moral) reason (or the rational will) that, in virtue of its rational authority, moves us into action.[91] Hampton's description of Kantian instrumental theory of normative reasons refers to what Kant described as the force of "*practical necessity,*" which is dictated by hypothetical imperatives. According to Kant's own view, hypothetical imperatives "present the *practical necessity* of a possible action as a means to achieving something else which one desires."[92] It is important to clarify that Kant's concept of "desires, which he sometimes describes as "intellectual feelings"[93] in his discussions of practical reason (or as he calls it, "practical necessity"), refers to the objects of the highest good that are ordered and organized by the rational will. This way of understanding Kant's view of the object of instrumental reason is supported by his popular dictum that "Whoever wills the end, *so far as reason has decisive influence on his action*, wills also the indispensable means to it that lie in his power."[94]

I have no qualm with the interpretation of Kantian theory of practical reasons to consist in an instrumental or hypothetical advice regarding the effective means of achieving one's highest good, whatever this means. The shift of the interpretation from Kantian non-instrumental theory of practical reasons to an attribution to Kant of an instrumental conception of reasons actually reveals and highlights the attractiveness of the Humean view. The shift in the interpretation is motivated by an attempt to find for practical reason a scientific grounding, as Hume did. Hence, Kantians' acceptance of the need to redefine the function of practical reason instrumentally makes a similar effort that was initiated by Hume earlier (whether he succeeded or not is not the issue here) insightful.

The problem that raises a serious concern is the fact that the shift in the interpretation (to the Kantian camp) is the unfortunate move that has led Humeans to be pushed aside. In defending the Kantian instrumental theory, Hampton makes a puzzling radical claim that Hume does not have a theory of practical reasons *at all*. The problem that Hampton has with Hume's theory of normative reasons is based on her idea that Hume does not at all have an instrumentalist theory of

practical reason. On her view, "Hume does not advocate the instrumental conception of practical reason as that conception is normally understood by contemporary theorists who endorse it."[95] She argues that Hume's conception of reason is not a variant of the instrumentalist view because, on her view, Hume conceived the instrumentalist theory as problematic from a naturalistic or scientific standpoint. Hampton develops her argument by citing some passages to support her view that, for Hume, it is incorrect, in the strictest sense, to describe an action as rational or irrational, even if it does, or fails thereof, to achieve and optimize the stated aim of the agent.[96] This idea, on Hampton's view, directly contradicts the first thesis of instrumental conception of reason, according to which "*an action is rational* to the extent that an agent believes (reasonably) that it furthers the attainment of an end."[97]

I find misleading the view that, in Hume's moral thought, we are justified in optimizing and realizing the objects of our desires, *whatever they are* (even when counterintuitive, as we noted from Piper). The criticism is grounded in the restriction of Hume's instrumental theory of practical reason to only motivating reasons. In other words, critics do not recognize the normative component of Hume's instrumental theory of practical reason. Admittedly, Smith came close to recognizing the normative version of Humean theory of instrumental reason when he compared it against the Kantian version. However, he did not find the Humean version relatively plausible because his view that Hume did not see how the objects of our desires (ends) could be critically evaluated. I consider it misleading to construe Hume's instrumental theory of practical reason as restricted only to the task of advising us how to optimize and maximally realize our desires. Certainly, its computational function of calculating and telling us the most efficient means of achieving our goals is the primary instrumental function that Hume assigned for practical reasons. But he also, in a secondary way, believed that our desirable goals need to be projects that are reasonably acceptable, at least, in the sense of being projects that are consistent with communal or social values.[98] Conceiving the function of reason as means-ends cognitive instrument by no means implies the view that Hume allowed no rational criticism of our ends, as critics indict him. The calculation of the consequences and impacts of objects of our desires that are not morally worth of pursuing (as not consistent with socially acceptable values), on Hume's view, is part of the computational function of practical reason.

Critics may defend their idea that, for Hume, actions cannot be appropriately described as rational or irrational on different grounds but their disavowal of Hume's commitment to normative account of instrumental practical reason is fundamentally flawed. Hampton's account flies directly in the face of explicit passages from Hume. The discussion that follows outlines passages from Hume to demonstrate that the attribution to him the view that by conceiving reason

instrumentally, Hume implied the view that we ought to pursue our desires, *whatever they may be,* is not a fair criticism. Hume's main argument in the passages that are often cited to support the idea that, for him, no action can be judged as irrational needs to be examined closely. The following remark is one of the typical sources of reference to the idea that Hume believed that objects of our desires cannot be rationally justified or condemned. "Where a passion is neither founded on false supposition, nor chuses means insufficient for the end, the understanding can neither justify nor condemn it" (T. 416). In the same argument, Hume illustrated the argument by the following four other remarks. (i) "'Tis not contrary to reason to prefer the destruction of the whole world to the scratching of my finger." (ii) "'Tis not contrary to reason for me to chuse my total ruin, to prevent the least uneasiness of an *Indian* or person wholly unknown to me." (iii) "'Tis as little contrary to reason to prefer even my own acknowledg'd lesser good to my greater, and have a more ardent affection for the former than the latter." (iv) "A trivial good may, from certain circumstances, produce a desire superior to what arises from the greatest and most valuable enjoyment."

Call the remarks "not contrary to reason claim." The claim is based upon Hume's logical classification of the mind. He divided the mind into two logical compartments, the rational faculty and the sensible faculty. Whereas the manifestations of the rational faculty produce beliefs and judgments, the manifestations of the sensible faculty motivates actions. Truths and falsehoods are strictly descriptive terms for the virtues of our beliefs and judgments. By contrast, actions and passions may be properly described as right or wrong, laudable (praiseworthy) or blameworthy. Right and praiseworthy actions are virtuous actions, and wrong and blamable actions are vicious actions. In his "not contrary to reason claim," Hume followed his logical classification of the mind to argue that, in the strictest logical sense, actions and desires cannot be judged or described as true and false, reasonable and unreasonable, in the logical way of speaking. Properly speaking, these expressions are, strictly, descriptive terms for the manifestations of the rational faculty. The summary of Hume's logical argument may be gleaned from the following passage.

> Reason is the discovery of truth and falsehood. Truth or falsehood consists in an agreement or disagreement…Whatever, therefore, is not susceptible of this agreement or disagreement, is incapable of being true or false, and can never be an object of our reason. Now 'tis evident our passions, volitions, and actions, are not susceptible of any such agreement or disagreement….'Tis impossible, therefore, they can be pronounced either true or false, and be either contrary or conformable to reason…. Actions may be laudable or blamable; but they cannot be reasonable or unreasonable. Laudable or blamable, therefore, are not the same with reasonable or unreasonable (T. 458).

Hume considered it an abuse of language (a classification mistake) to describe the manifestations of the sensible faculty by descriptive terms that rather apply exclusively to the manifestations of

the rational faculty. This is the logic behind his "not contrary to reason claim." Actions, preferences, choices and desires are not, in the strictest logical sense of Hume's classification of the mind, caused by the manifestations of the rational faculty. Therefore, they cannot be appropriately described in rationalistic terms as reasonable or unreasonable, truth or false. In the appropriate sense, they can rather be described as right or wrong, and similar other appraisal terms.

Logically, the argument is sound, if we accept Hume's logical classification of the mind and the descriptive terms that he assigned distinctively for their manifestations. To this extent, it appears correct to say that, for Hume, actions cannot be judged as rational or irrational, and that he must be wrong on this. For, absurd cases can be cited that clearly seem right to be condemned as irrational actions. The objection here, however, arises from an inattentive reading of Hume.[99] In the "not contrary to reason claim", Hume actually maintained that actions can be judged or condemned as irrational or unreasonable, *if the sentiment that causes them are founded in false beliefs or judgments*. We must recall that there is a belief pair in Hume's instrumental conception of practical reasons: belief-desire theory. We must note also that, for Hume, objects of our sentiments (desires) are fixed by our beliefs and judgments. We can actually glean this view from the first remark that premises his "not contrary to reason claim," according to which, the understanding can neither justify nor condemn an action as unreasonable, *where the passion that caused it "is neither founded on false supposition*, nor chuses means insufficient for the end." Hume insisted on this idea not only in his premise but also in his concluding remarks about the "not contrary to reason claim." "In short, a passion must be accompanied with some false judgment, in order to its being unreasonable; and even then 'tis not the passion, properly speaking, which is unreasonable, but the judgment" (T. 416).

Hume's argument implicitly points to the fact that, both the method we adopt as a means of maximizing and realizing our goals, and the goals themselves, depending upon the belief upon which they are founded, can be irrational or unreasonable. Critics miss this point simply because they are misled by Hume's logical classification of the mind. The ambiguity involved in the descriptive terms that Hume assigned distinctively to the two logical departments of the mind is mitigated by his belief that the passions that cause actions supervene on our beliefs and judgments. So, actions can be irrational via their supervenience on a given belief. Hume accepted the view that ill-perceived objects of desires or ends can be rationally corrected, when the errors of the beliefs, on the basis of which they were formed, are detected.[100] As Hume argued, "the moment we perceive the falsehood of any supposition, or the insufficiency of any means our passions yield to our reason without any opposition" (T. 416). According to his illustration, "I

may desire any fruit as of an excellent relish; but whenever you convince me of my mistake, my longing ceases" (417). Consider also his conclusion.

> I may will the performance of certain actions as means of obtaining any desired good; but as my willing of these actions is only secondary, and founded on the supposition, that they are causes of the propos'd effects; as soon as I discover the falsehood of that supposition, they must become indifferent to me (T. 417).

It must be emphasized that Hume's debate with rationalist philosophers was not a rejection of their idea that moral decisions and actions require rational evaluation. Hume never at all undercut reasons completely from morality. The hybrid theory (the belief-desire theory) of reasons for actions is implied by his naturalistic theory of moral explanation.[101] Normative reasons play an instrumental role in assisting our sensibility in making correct judgments about the rightness or wrongness of moral actions. Hume's position on the role of reasons in his naturalistic theory about the causal (motivating) factors that explain human behaviour is rejected by critics because they believe that a causal account does not capture the aspect of reflection and deliberation feature that is characteristic of acting for reasons. This assumption will be rejected when I defend in the next chapter the view that Hume actually ascribed to "second-order" mental states (or what he called "reflective passions") the capacity for evaluative moral judgments (decisions) and actions. What Hume rejected in his naturalistic approach to morality involved rationalists' conception of reason as the master of the passions. On the contrary, Hume believed that, given the practical nature of morality, reason *alone*, being a theoretical faculty, cannot be the source of moral actions.[102] On actions, reason plays a secondary role by serving the passions by counseling them both with the desirable objects (and projects) that are morally worth pursuing, and also with information regarding the efficient means of optimizing and realizing the objects of our desires.[103] Hume made the view explicitly clear in the introduction of the paper in which he developed his "not contrary to reason claim". He began the argument by maintaining explicitly that he was going to reject orthodox conception of morality as determined *solely* by reason. He proposed to reject the rationalist belief that the other faculty, the sensible component, contaminates the purity of normative demands of morality, when allowed any influence. Observe how Hume introduced the argument, which deserves to be quoted in full.

> Nothing is more usual in philosophy, and even in common life, than to talk of the combat of passion and reason, to give the preference to reason, and to assert that men are only so far virtuous as they conform themselves to its dictates. Every rational creature, 'tis said, is oblig'd to regulate his actions by reason; and if any other motive or principle challenge the direction of his conduct, he ought to oppose it, 'till it be entirely subdu'd, or at least brought to a conformity with that superior principle. On this method of thinking the greatest part of moral philosophy, ancient and modern, seems to be founded; nor is there an ampler field, as well for metaphysical arguments, as popular declamations, than this suppos'd pre-

> eminence of reason above passion. The eternity, invariableness, and divine origin of the former have been display'd to the best advantage: The blindness, unconstancy, and deceitfulness of the latter have been as strongly insisted on. *In order to shew the fallacy of all this philosophy*, I shall endeavour to prove *first*, that *reason alone* can never be a motive to any action of the will; and *secondly*, that it can never oppose passion in the direction of the will.[104]

I have highlighted Hume's expression, "reason alone", to call attention to the idea that he did not set forth to reject the role of reason in morality *per se*. His criticisms apply to the consideration of reason as the ultimate authority of moral decisions and actions. Despite the exaggerated way in which he articulated some of his criticisms, regarding the issue concerning the role of reason in morality, Hume was most often very careful in making this idea clear to the reader in many of his arguments. Notice few of his expressions, which I have highlighted in italic. "I believe it scarce will be asserted, that the first species of *reasoning alone* is ever the cause of any action" (T. 413). "Since *reason alone* can never produce any action...(T. 414). "... because *reason alone*, as we have already proved..."(T. 457). "*Reason of itself* is impotent..." (T. 457). And in the *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals,* Hume began the project by condemning each of the two sides of a moral dispute which tried to ground morality exclusively either in reason or sentiment alone. He considered "both sides of the question [as] susceptible of specious arguments."[105] Hume's own position on the issue was that "*reason* and *sentiment* concur in almost all moral determinations and conclusions" (E. 172). Reason by itself cannot motivate actions. Actions are motivated by sentiments. But sentiments on their own cannot also evaluate and discern both the proper objects of desires (the ends/goals) morally worth of pursuing and the efficient means of maximally realizing them. This computational function requires the assistance of the rational faculty. So, morality, on Hume's thought, is founded in collaboration between reason and sentiment. As he put it,

> [That] which pronounces characters and actions amiable or odious, praise-worthy or blamable; that which stamps on them the mark of honour or infamy, approbation or censure; that which renders morality an active principle and constitutes virtue our happiness, and vice our misery...I say... depends on some internal sense of feeling, which nature has made universal in the whole species. For what else can have an influence of this nature? But in order to pave the way for such a sentiment, and give a proper discernment of its object, it is often necessary, we find, that much reasoning should precede, that nice distinctions be made, just conclusions drawn, distant comparisons formed, complicated relations examined, and general facts fixed and ascertained...; it is requisite to employ much reasoning, in order to feel the proper sentiment; and a false relish may frequently be corrected by argument and reflection. There are just grounds to conclude, that moral beauty partakes much of this later species and demands the assistance of our intellectual faculties, in order to give it a suitable influence on the human mind" (E. 173).

We see that Hume, in his naturalistic moral system, conceived reason and sentiment as jointly required for morality. None of the two is by itself a sufficient principle for morality. Morality requires the collaboration between the two. This reveals Hume's way of reconciling his naturalism with the normative character of moral considerations. His attempt to reconcile naturalism with normativism about morality is not strange. Hume was a "bridge-builder," so to speak, who always sought a way of reconciling disputes by harmonizing opposing positions. For instance, in his moral system, he searched for continuity between science and morality, compatibility between reason and sentiment, and compatibility between freedom and the laws of nature. This is why he could identify his moral philosophy "a reconciling project" (E. 85). His naturalistic moral philosophy is not a radical naturalistic project that eschews normativity altogether. It does not seek to replace normativity completely by descriptive psychology, as Quine attempted to do in epistemology. Naturalism comes in various shapes of degrees, and Hume did not endorse the radical form.[106] He rather endorsed a moderate form of naturalism in which he urged normative questions to be answered by causal explanatory reasons. He saw questions about reasons that explain why moral agents do actually behave the way they do as related and relevant to questions about normative reasons regarding how they ought to behave, rationally. So, in his moderate naturalism, explanations and justifications of reasons for actions are interconnected.

The difficulty on the part of critics in accepting the fit between naturalistic accounts and normative commitments involves the failure to recognize that a descriptive account can have a normative content. Scientific conclusions are descriptive but they impose normative commitments. Rationally, scientific laws *must* be believed and accepted; we cannot rationally reject scientific laws, typically the laws of nature. Nicholas Rescher defends the idea in his argument about the extent to which laws and rules mimic each other. He argues:

> Laws are akin to, yet different from both rules and descriptions. Like rules, laws state how things 'must be', yet unlike most familiar rules laws admit no exceptions, but are always 'obeyed'. Like descriptions, laws state how things are; yet unlike standard descriptions, laws go beyond describing how things in fact are to make claims about how they must be. Thus laws have both a descriptive and a rulish [relish?] aspect that prevents their being grouped squarely into either category.[107]

"Must" implies ought in a normative or obligatory sense.[108] This suggests that descriptive laws that we cannot rationally resist but must be obeyed enforce a normative commitment: they ought to be believed and obeyed. For example, it would be absurd to reject or refuse to believe the medical discovery that HIV virus causes a deadly disease, such as AIDS. The principle that *must* descriptive claims enforce *ought* normative obligation was implicit in Hume's naturalistic moral

thought. Fred Wilson, for example, follows J. Lenz, Nicholas Capaldi, and Peter Jones to emphasize "the role that the '*must* implies *ought*' principle plays in Hume's defense of the rationality of causal inference."[109] In particular, the principle is supported by Hume's argument against Pyrrhonean scepticism that belief is, in practice, unavoidable. As we noted we must and ought to believe, if we can navigate and get along cooperatively in the social world in which we live. As Hume put it, "human beings *must* act and reason and believe" (E. 128, my emphasis). Thus, though Hume's naturalistic account is descriptive, it nevertheless accommodates and reinforces normative requirements of moral considerations. Undeniably, Hume did not conceive ought normative moral claims as requiring categorical normative obligations, obligations that must be obeyed no matter what or irrespective of their instrumental value and detrimental effects for a person's utility expectations and fulfillment. But as we have noted, he revised the traditional rationalists' account of rational justification for actions and redefined normativity instrumentally in naturalistic terms.

In conclusion, I want to emphasize that Hume's naturalistic theory does not undermine nor deny the normative character of morality. His naturalistic moral theory of moral explanation advocates the view that normative questions are answerable by causal explanations; we provide causal accounts, such as the motives and character traits that causally explain a person's behavior, to answer normative questions. Normative questions regarding justifying reasons for acting involve causal questions regarding the reasons that caused a given action in a determinate way. Answering the latter question provides a clue to understanding normative reasons regarding how human beings ought to behave, morally.

Chapter 4

HUME AND MORAL DISPOSITIONS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter and the one that follows (chapter five) are continuous. They involve discussions about Hume's concept of "moral sentiments" and the problem of judgments of moral responsibility. We saw in chapter one the view that Hume's naturalistic moral theory is a theory about principles that causally determine the behaviour of moral agents. We noted also in chapter two the view that, in defending his moral science, Hume conceived the manifestations of our sentiments as the principles of the mind that causally determine our moral behavior. In the *Treatise* and *Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, he considered moral decisions and practices as determined by our sentiments. But how to interpret the nature of the sentiments in which Hume grounded morality is a problem in his scholarship.[1] A standard reading holds that, by placing human beings in the sensible order of nature, Hume took the view that our moral beliefs and practices are determined by the manifestations of our original human nature. It may then be assumed that Hume conceived of moral dispositions and character traits as natural abilities that cannot be cultivated and developed voluntarily by our own choices and practices.[2] This view seems to undermine moral responsibility, for it seems to suggest the idea that, in Hume's moral system, we have no control over our moral sentiments, given their natural and involuntary nature.[3]

The standard interpretation is often bolstered by the following two arguments: the view that Hume conceived (a) moral dispositions as determined by our biological human nature,[4] and that (b) what we are, generally, is shaped (influenced) involuntarily by the social space into which we are born.[5] The issues involving (a) and (b) may be considered as separate and competing problems. Whereas (a) suggests the view that our moral motivations are fixed innately by the mechanisms of our biological human nature, (b) suggests the view that our moral dispositions are determined by social and other environmental influences, such as parental upbringing and

religious values. However, the two both support the conclusion that a moral disposition is not a character that we develop by our own choices. This latter problem is my basic concern in this and the next chapters. I argue for a contrary position. The view that Hume conceived of a moral disposition as a moral character that we do not develop voluntarily on our own is worrisome, if seriously entertained. If Hume, indeed, conceived of moral dispositions as involuntarily acquired natural abilities, then he could not provide any coherent theory of moral accountability. For, the kind of person that we turn out to be would be a matter of "luck." Subsequently, we can do nothing but sympathize with a criminal as someone who acted only at the mercy of "fate".[6] It seems then that our judgments of moral responsibility are incoherent or unjustified: we seem to morally condemn, punish, approve and reward people for things that they produced by the determination of luck and misfortunes.

In response, I argue that the standard interpretation is founded in two fundamental distinctions in Hume's moral thought that critics fail to take seriously. They involve distinctions between (i) "first-order" and "second-order" passions, and (ii) *natural dispositions* and *moral dispositions.* The two are implied by Hume's distinction between what he called "primary or original impressions" and "secondary or reflective impressions" (*Treatise* II: I. I). The distinction is consistent with the states of the mind that are identified in recent literature as "first-order" and "second-order" reflective desires, according to which human beings have reflective evaluative capacity to control the manifestations of their natural propensities and desire (choose) to be what they want.[7] The discussion in this present chapter argues that Hume was committed to a similar position. Hume certainly believed that we have some character traits that were naturally selected by our biological human nature, including the social institutions, such us our family and religion, into which we were born. But he did not hold the view that social and biological determination of our character erode our ability to choose what we want to be. I argue that Hume believed that moral agents were naturally endowed with potential reflective evaluative capacities that, when cultivated through training and practice (or what we generally describe as "habituation"), enable them to control their natural sentiments and determine what they are. I will turn in the subsequent chapter (chapter five) to call attention to Hume's specific suggestion of how we deal with issues of contingencies and luck that seem to undermine our judgments of moral responsibility. I have structured the present discussion into two main sections. The first, titled "Second-Order Moral Dispositions," calls to attention Hume's distinction between "primary impressions" and "reflective impressions" to defend Hume's belief that moral agents have potential reflective evaluative capacities to control their natural propensities. The second, "Moral Habituation," discusses

Hume's view of how we cultivate our potential capacities through training and practice to choose what we want to be.

4.1. SECOND-ORDER MORAL DISPOSITIONS

Hume's account of moral sentiments is grounded in his theory of the passions. Therefore, a deeper understanding of his view regarding the nature of human character and its motivations requires a careful study of his theory of the passions.[8] The theory is scattered in many of his works,[9] but I restrict my study to the account he offered in Book Two of the *Treatise*.[10] My main task is to call attention to the central place in Hume's moral thought, of our capacity for reflective evaluation and the crucial role that he believed it plays in cultivating and pursuing a virtuous happy life. The state of the mind that I am describing as the capacity for reflective evaluation refers to the passions that Hume identified as "reflective or secondary impressions." I will follow the distinction which is referred to as "first-order" and "second-order" desires in recent literature to identify Hume's concept of "reflective or secondary impressions" as "second-order passions" and contrast them with what he called "primary or original impressions," which I will also label as "first-order-passions." Let us first consider Hume's classification of the passions into first and second order impressions.

4.1.1. FIRST-ORDER AND SECOND-ORDER PASSIONS

Hume usually used the notions of moral character and moral sentiments univocally to describe the psychological states of the mind (the moral dispositions) that determine our moral decisions and actions. He began his discussions of the passions in book two of the *Treatise* by classifying the perceptions of the mind into various divisions.[11] To capture the particular modes of the passions that he identified as the sentiments that motivate us into moral action, we require a close study of his classification of the passions into two general kinds of impressions. Besides primitive sensations (such as the feelings of pain and pleasure), in his study of the manifestations of the mind, Hume identified a secondary capacity called "reflective impressions." He explained the two in the following way.

> As all the perceptions of the mind may be divided into *impressions* and *ideas*, so the impressions admit of another division into *original* and *secondary*. This division of the impressions is the same with that which I formerly made used of when I distinguish'd them into impressions of *sensation* and *reflexion* (T. 275, Hume's emphasis).[12]

In Hume's moral thought, the impressions of sensations and reflections are two general sentiments (passions) that compete for the determination and control of the mind. His typical examples of the primary impressions include the sensations of pain and pleasure. He grouped the

impressions we have about beauty and deformity, moral sentiments, approval and disapproval of persons, desires, aversion, fear, and love among the secondary impressions.[13] For example, our approval or disapproval of a moral character is a sentiment causally stimulated by the impressions and ideas that we acquire by thinking or deliberating about the tendency of the character to effect uneasy or pleasurable consequences. According to Hume's argument, "this idea of pleasure or pain, when it returns upon the soul, produces the new impressions of desire and aversion, hope and fear, which may properly be called impressions of reflexion" (T. 8).

Hume explained the two passions in terms of the causal process by which they arise in us; in his account, passions always arise in us from "mental causes."[14] He treated it as a causal issue, the question of how the impressions (like all other passions) arise and how they lead to other experiences or actions. Unlike the primary or original impressions, the secondary or reflective impressions arise in us based on prior perceptions; a reflective impression is obtained based on the ideas we form by thinking about the objects of our sensory perceptions. But the primary impressions are original existents; they are sensory perceptions that arise in us without any prior impressions and ideas. As he described them, "original impressions or impressions of sensation are such as without any antecedent perception arise in the soul, from the constitution of the Body, from the animal spirits, or from the application of objects to the external organs" (T. 276). Mental agitations, such as the sensation of anger, are psychological states of the mind that Hume often used to identify the original impressions. "When I am angry," he maintained in one of his illustrations, "I am actually possest with the passion, and in that emotion have no more reference to any object, than when I am thirty, or sick, or more than five foot high" (T. 128).[15] Though he treated them as original existents, Hume argued that the ultimate causal element that produces the primary impressions cannot be philosophically explained; they arise from "a natural impulse or instinct," but their specific causal agent is "perfectly unaccountable" (T. 149). He treated questions of the ultimate causes of the primary impressions as issues that transcend the limits of philosophical reasoning.

> As to those *impressions*, which arise from the *senses*, their ultimate cause is, in my opinion, perfectly inexplicable by human reason, and 'twill always be impossible to decide with certainty, whether they arise immediately from the object, or are produc'd by the creative power of the mind, or are deriv'd from the author of our being (T. 84, Hume's emphasis).

Instead, Hume restricted the study of the structure and the mechanisms of the physiological feature of the mind to the special sciences, especially physiology and anatomy. He wrote: "The examination of our sensations belongs more to anatomists and natural philosophers than to moral" (T. 8). But, "the impressions of reflexion, *viz.* Passions, desires, and emotions," which "arise

mostly from ideas," Hume believed, "principally deserve our attention," when dealing with moral issues (*ibid.*). Hume called the reflective passions secondary impressions to demarcate them from the original existence of the primary impressions. The reflective passions are secondary to the primary impressions because they causally arise in us from ideas and beliefs that we form through thinking and reflections on our immediate sensations. Whereas the impressions of sensation "arises in the soul [mind] originally, from unknown causes," reflective impressions are "derived in a great measure from our ideas", especially, from "the ideas of pain and pleasure" (T. 7-8). Hume conceived the primary impressions as primitive instincts that are manifested by our biological human nature; he described them as biological or physiological forces of the mind. He illustrated their physiological manifestations in the following way. "Bodily pains and pleasures are the source of many passions, both when felt and consider'd by the mind; but arise originally in the soul, or in the body, whichever you please to call it, without any preceding thought or perception. A fit of the gout produces a long train of passions, as grief, hope, fear" (T.276, see also 287-288).[16] As biological phenomena, Hume conceived of the original passions as intrinsic features of the mind; they are original or innate psychological features of us.[17] Therefore, he construed them as inseparable from us: "these qualities, which we must consider as original, are such as are inseparable from the soul, and can be resolv'd into no other" (T. 280).[18]

Let us consider also the exact nature and functions of the capacity of the mind that Hume identified as secondary or reflective impressions. As we noted, Hume explained the secondary impressions in terms of how they causally arise in us through reflections and evaluations of the impressions and ideas we form by thinking about the effects of the primitive impressions or the impressions of the first order. As he put it, "Secondary, or reflective impressions are such as proceed from some of these [primary or] original ones, either immediately or by the interposition of its idea" (T. 275, my emphasis). Secondary impressions causally supervene (depend), so to speak, on the primary impressions.[19] As we have noted, the primary impressions are basic biological or physiological mental properties. By reflecting on their physiological manifestations, we acquire secondary or reflective passions. Therefore, the primary passions form the basis of the secondary passions. Without the primary biological passions, the secondary passions could have no causal foundation. As Hume put it, "unless nature had given some original qualities to the mind, it cou'd never have any secondary ones; because in that case it wou'd have no foundation for action, nor cou'd ever begin to exert itself."[20] Notice his emphasis:

> Nature must, by the internal frame and constitution of the mind, give an original propensity to fame...; there is a passion which points immediately to its object, and constitutes it our good or happiness; *as there are other secondary passions which*

afterwards arise and pursue it as a part of our happiness, when once it is constituted such by our original affections."[21]

As original existents, we have no control over how the primary sensations of pleasure and pain, for example, causally *arise* in us. By contrast, the secondary impressions are impressions of second-order that we acquire when we think and reflect upon the manifestations (especially their causal effects or consequences) of the primary sensations. For example, we acquire secondary impressions or impressions of the second order when, in the craving to eat the cake, we reflect upon the effects of that desire on our desire to slim down or control our diet for health reasons. The desire we have for avoiding the cake based on our reflection and evaluation of its impact on our health is a passion of the second order. The desire of the second order was acquired causally from the impressions and ideas that we have by evaluating the causal effects of the original craving for the cake.

Consider the argument this way. Our motivations are, on Hume's view, largely determined by the passions of pleasure and uneasiness. We believe and act according to how nature has determined us to feel. "Nature, by an absolute and uncontroulable necessity has determined us to judge as well as to breathe and feel" (T. 183). We consider a behavior as warranted (acceptable) when its effects are pleasing to us, unwarranted when we feel uneasy about it. Pleasure and uneasiness are natural instincts that Hume described as original passions. In Hume's words, "there is implanted in the human mind a perception of pain and pleasure, as the chief spring and moving principle of all its actions" (T. 118). As sensible creatures, we have a natural disposition to be stimulated by pleasurable or uneasy objects. But the fact is that not all feelings of pleasure and uneasiness must be followed or acted upon. For example, we need not eat simply because a given food seems pleasing to us. We may not be hungry or the food may be for someone else. We must note also that feelings can be aroused (caused) by false beliefs and perceptions. On Hume's view, sometimes we can be "mistaken with regard to the influence of objects in producing pain or pleasure" (T. 460). According to his illustration, by a mistake of perception we can be caused to feel and fancy as pleasant and delicious a fruit that may not, in fact, be suitable to our health (*ibid.*). Sometimes too our perceptions can cause us to feel and therefore form false judgments about others.[22] On Hume's example, "a person, who thro' a window sees any lewd behaviour of mine with my neighbour's wife, may be so simple as to imagine she is certainly my own" (T. 461). Other times too, feelings may offer us certain immediate or short-term incentives at the expense of other higher and meaningful values. On Hume's conclusion, when the mistakes (false impressions) and the immediate temptations are detected (through reflections upon their effects), the original feelings must be withdrawn or

suspended. The original instincts of pleasure and uneasiness need to be subjected to a critical examination before acting upon them. This work is the function of the passions that Hume identified as reflective or secondary passions.[23] We shall see shortly that the ability to step back, reflect, and subject our immediate passions to critical examination before acting is possible, according to Hume's suggestion, through training and practice. The foregoing outline explains the means by which the impressions arise in us. The account has emphasized that Hume conceived of the reflective capacity of the mind as a second-order disposition because of his belief that they causally arise from impressions and ideas we form by thinking about the causal effects of the primary impressions.

Now, in which of the two kinds of impressions or sentiments did Hume consider as the source of our moral motivations? I think it would be a logical jump to conclude from Hume's consideration of the original passions as inseparable intrinsic biological features of us to imply the view that he invariably conceived of the original passions as the complete set of *motivational sources of our moral lives and actions*. This was not Hume's conclusion. It is one thing to say that *human actions* are motivated by the manifestations of biological human nature, and another to conclude that *moral actions* are motivated by biological human nature. To understand the argument, we should be clear of a distinction between *moral* and *non-moral* actions. We should note also a distinction between *natural* and *moral* dispositions. Let me illustrate the former distinction first. Take this simple example: A cat killing a mouse is an action yet in our normal moral deliberations we do not indict cats for committing a moral crime.[24] Hume put the issue in a query form: "Why incest in the human species is criminal, and why the very same action, and the same relations in animals have not the smallest moral turpitude and deformity? (T. 467).[25] Regarding the distinction between natural and moral dispositions, Hume's view that animal species (both the human and the non-human) are sentient creatures motivated by biological instincts is separable from his view regarding the *motivational source* of morality. Our natural (original) inclinations might control us towards one direction but morality might require of us to do otherwise. As we shall see, Hume believed that by themselves our natural propensities, such as our anger, when uncontrolled and directed, very often motivate us towards a contrary direction of morality. We need to understand that what we are biologically is one thing, and what we are as moral agents another. What we are biologically is an accidental contingency, but what we are morally is something that we develop, depending on how we condition (habituate) the mind through our practices. Both the human and the non-human animals are motivated by biological instincts.[26] But only human beings are judged as morally culpable. So, the source of moral motivations of human beings must be something else (something different from mere biological

or physiological forces that we share with the other lower animals).[27] From his study of the mind and human behavior, Hume observed that our moral behaviors are guided and regulated by different passions, not the originally given biological instincts. The passions that motivate us towards moral directions are the second-order dispositions of the mind that Hume identified as reflective impressions.

Hume's distinction between primary passions and secondary or reflective passions, in a sense, anticipated the logic involved in the distinction between what is described in recent literature as "first-order" and "second-order desires."[28] The distinction is sometimes identified as "two-level theories."[29] The idea involved in the distinction is that sensible human beings, as contrasted with the non-human animals, possess evaluative reflective capacities to critically examine the manifestations of their original propensities and develop a disposition of the second order to desire what they want to be. I follow Henry Frankfurt's description for my elaboration. Frankfurt argues that it is not enough to identify a person as a subject of her "primitive desires," choices, and deliberations--psychological states that we owe to our biological human nature; a person is more than these primitive psychological dispositions.[30] On Frankfurt's view, a person is identifiable by her second-order desires. By desires of the second order, he refers to the ability that a person has to step back and take a deep breath, so to speak, from the control of her immediate feelings or desires and *desire* (will) to be governed by a well-considered (carefully examined) desires. Second-order desires are acquired by thinking carefully about our immediate overriding desires, such as the desire either to watch our favorite television show or to turn off the television and finish our school homework assignment.[31] The best choice between conflicting desires is the one whose costs and benefits were carefully examined. Frankfurt's distinction between first-order and second-order desires highlights the distinctive psychological states of the mind that set human agents apart from the non-human animals, besides the biological instincts that they share in common. As sentient creatures, we are naturally disposed to feel or experience certain primitive desires, such as the desire for power and dominion. Natural desires and similar other passions, such as hunger for food, are biological desires of the first order that we are disposed to have involuntarily. We share these biological instincts with the non-human animals. But what Frankfurt calls "second-order desires" involves abilities that human beings have to direct and control their natural propensities. "Besides wanting and choosing and being moved *to do* this or that," according to Frankfurt, "men may also want to have (or not to have) certain desires and motives."[32] By this, he implies the view that human beings "are capable of wanting to be different, in their preferences and purposes, from what they are."[33]

The reflective power of the human will is, according to Frankfurt's account, a higher level evaluative capacity that is exclusively possessed by human beings alone. The distinctive feature that makes us essentially different from the non-human animals, according to his account, is defined by the unique complex structure of human will. As he puts it, "one essential difference between persons and other creatures is to be found in the structure of a person's will."[34] Frankfurt acknowledges that the will is a passion that is not restricted to humans alone; it is also possessed by the non-human animals. In his view, "human beings are not alone in having desires and motives, or in making choices. They share these things with the members of certain species, some of whom appear to engage in deliberation and to make decisions based upon prior thought."[35] According to Frankfurt's account, some of the non-human animals that have wills possess also a certain degree of intentional states that confer with them a certain degree of evaluative discriminations (preferences). As Charles Taylor illustrates it, "in a sense the capacity to evaluate can be ascribed to any subject of desire. My dog 'evaluates' that beefsteak positively."[36] However, the structure of the human will is unique, according to Frankfurt, in terms of its capacity for "*reflective self-evaluation*."[37] The capacity for reflective self-evaluation is a unique feature of the human will that, unlike the non-human animals, enables them to choose to desire (or not to desire) the desires and inclinations that they have in virtue of their biological human nature.[38]

In essence, Frankfurt's account claims that, through reflective evaluation of our natural tendencies, we can choose to remain or change what we are. Charles Taylor highlights this idea in his comments on Frankfurt's account. Taylor describes what Frankfurt calls first-order and second-order desires the "*de facto* and the "*de jure*" characters of a person.[39] The one controlled by *de facto* desires is the person whose actions are motivated by the goals, desires, and purposes sanctioned by her basic impulses. By contrast, the one controlled by *de jure* desires is the person who, before acting, can ask herself: "is this the kind of being I ought to be, or really want to be?"[40] On this view, human subjects are "capable of evaluating what they are, and to the extent that they can shape themselves on this evaluation, are responsible for what they are in a way that other subjects of action and desire (the higher animals for instance) cannot be said to be."[41].

The idea involved in the recent distinction between "first-order" and "second-order desires was implicit in Hume's distinction between "primary or original passions" and "secondary or reflective passions. Hume's concept of secondary or reflective passions corresponds to the reflective evaluative desires that Frankfurt describes as second-order desires. Similarly, what Hume identified as primary or original passions correspond to what Frankfurt refers to as desires of the first-order. The argument can be bolstered by calling to attention the view that Hume followed his distinction between first-order and reflective second-order passions consistently to

explicate why we do not judge the non-human animals as responsible moral agents. As we noted in Frankfurt's account, Hume also believed that human beings are responsible moral agents because of the reflective capacity that they have to determine the manifestations of their natural propensities. One of the places that Hume defended the argument involves his discussion of the similarities and differences between the human and the non-human animals, in terms of their moral standing (status). As we saw in Frankfurt's account, Hume also distinguished the moral status of human agents from non-human agents because he conceived of the latter as lacking the degree of evaluative second-order reflective capacity that we have. Generally, Hume saw some similarities and differences between human beings and the other lower level animals, such as dogs. Human beings and the other animals are not different because, as sentient creatures, they all have desires and other physiological inclinations, such as the desire for food and reproduction. Though they all have common biological desires and inclinations, Hume believed that human animals differ from non-human animals in terms of the higher degree of their reflective cognitive abilities, such as their capacity for reflective evaluation. He argued: "Men are superior to beasts principally by the superiority of their reason" (T. 610; cf. 468); we are also superior in terms of "knowledge and understanding" (T. 326). Thus, human animals are superior to the non-human animals in terms of their capacities for reasoning (deliberation), knowledge, and understanding. The capacity for reasoning consists in the ability to deliberate and anticipate the cause and effect consequences of our character before acting.

The advantage of having cognitive abilities for deliberation, knowledge and understanding, in Hume's view, comes along with moral responsibility. We are endowed with cognitive abilities to think and evaluate the propensities and consequences of our natural tendencies, especially in terms of their beneficial and harmful effects both to ourselves and to others, before acting upon them. The reflective evaluative capacity that human beings have imposes on them moral responsibility for their actions. By contrast, the non-human animals cannot be judged as virtuous or vicious simply because they lack the degree of cognitive capacities that could enable them to reason reflectively and deliberate on the consequences of their propensities. As Hume illustrated it, "animals have little or no sense of virtue or vice; they quickly lose sight of the relations of blood; and are incapable of that of right and property" (T. 326; cf. 468). The possession of evaluative reflective capacities sets us apart from the other animals, in terms of judgments about moral responsibility. Human beings are moral agents, but the non-human animals are not. As Barbara Herman maintains,

> One important way in which we are not like dogs is that we are reflective and self-regulating. Morality therefore addresses us as agents: persons not only able to respond to its directives, but also able to take up its reasons as our own. Able, that is, if we are

> trained to recognize them and brought up to have affective dispositions that are themselves reason responsive."[42]

The lower level animals are not judged as morally responsible for their behavior because they lack the ability to rank and evaluate the physiological forces and inclinations that control their instinctive behaviors. By contrast, human beings are judged responsible for the character that produce their actions because they are believed to possess capacities to order and evaluate the consequences of their actions. The foregoing illustration supports the view that Hume did not ground morality in the first-order physiological propensities that we share with the non-human animals. He believed that human agents are morally responsible since they have cognitive capacities to reason, evaluate, and understand the effects or consequences of their natural propensities. I turn in the next discussion to call attention to the fundamental importance that Hume accorded passions of the second order in the attainment of stable moral dispositions or character.

4.1.2. CALM MORAL DISPOSITIONS

The crucial function that Hume accorded second-order reflective passions is supported by the emphasis that he placed on the view that, to pursue a virtuous life, morality requires of us to calm down the manifestations of our natural sentiments into calm moral character and act on the motivations of our second order sentiments. Hume often described the passions of the second-order "calm passions." He identified the second-order passions as calm mental dispositions immediately after dividing the passions into original and reflective passions. The technical classification of perceptions into primary and secondary impressions, and the further distinction of the latter into "calm" and "violent" impressions, Penelhum has suggested, are fundamental to understanding Hume's discussion of the capacity for choice and resolution of conflicts among the passions.[43] Hume frequently used the notion of "calm passion" (or as he sometimes called it, "calm desires") to describe the stable state of our moral character. The concept recurs in many places of Hume's writings.[44] Particularly, the concept occupied a central place in his criticism of rationalistic moral system. "The doctrine of calm passions is", as Penelhum put is "Hume's main card in the game against rationalist psychology."[45]

When identifying calm dispositions with reflective passions, Hume often associated violent passions as agitations of the primary impressions.[46] He identified the calm passions according to the relative degree of intensity by which they animate the soul; he distinguished calm passions from violent passions in terms of their degree of "intensity."[47] As Ardal remarks in reference to the two passions: "the *fundamentum divisionis* between the calm and the violent is the intensity of

the feeling considered as an impression. Thus a calm passion is distinguished by the fact that it is experienced, on most occasions, at a low emotional intensity."[48] As Hume saw it, the distinction between calm and violent passions constitutes the common way of distinguishing between "gentle and intense emotions" (T. 276). Their degree of force or intensity determines which of the two is in control of the mind. He described calm passions as "soft," "agreeable," and "pleasant," but violent passions as "rough or fierce," "aggressive," "boisterous."[49] If the agitating violent passions animate us, so to speak, we *may* act not only impulsively but also harshly. But if we cultivate and train (habituate) them into a steady and settled disposition, we may be in a stronger control of ourselves. We put ourselves in a position to be able to step back away from the impulsiveness of the immediate passions and cool off, so to speak, from their intense animation. "Calm passions," as Hume tells us, cause "no disorder in the soul;" they display "little emotion in the mind" (T. 417).[50] When "the predominant inclinations of the soul" settle down as a steady calm disposition (depending on how it has been conditioned or habituated), as Hume tells us, they "commonly produce no longer any sensible agitation" or disturbance (T. 419). We are emotionally controlled and the mind is stable, when our passions are calm. Hence, Hume described moral sentiments as "soft" and "gentle" passions. (T. 470).[51] Morality requires of not only steady principles of action; it also requires of a stable disposition that confers trust on our character. Without confidence in the stable and consistent disposition of a person, we cannot trust and predict his or her next behavior. For example, we cannot believe that a person would keep his or her promise, or would not harm us if we invite him or her into our homes. Certainly, we cannot sensibly enter transactions with a person whose sentiments or character we cannot trust. A stable disposition or character is essential to morality. This was Hume's point in his emphasis on the essential importance of the need to cultivate calm dispositions by habituating and controlling the agitating impressions.

Hume connected the ability to adopt calm dispositions (self-control) or character with the disposition to pursue a virtuous happy life.[52] We are in a better position to pursue a worth while meaningful life if we cultivate a disposition that enables us to always reflect upon our immediate inclinations and desires before taking any decision and action. The one with this ability, on Hume's view, is the person who, by cultivating his potential abilities, acquires a strong mind or will to be in control of his character. "What we call strength of mind," he argues, "implies the prevalence of the calm passions above the violent" (T. 418). A wise person, on Hume's thought, has a calm disposition to reflect before deciding and acting. Hume therefore associated "base" qualities such as "foolish" decisions as dictated (influenced) by unreflective sentiments, and conversely, intellectual qualities such as wisdom or sagacity (wit) with the manifestations of calm

passions. He generally used terms such as "tender mind" and "virtuous character" interchangeably.[53] Moral qualities like wisdom, virtue and happiness are, in his discussion, closely related. What connects all these values together into a virtuous character is the disposition of calmness. In his view, a virtuous and wise person will be almost assuredly happy as well.[54] By the motivation of calm passions, we are able to make wise decisions. For example, when he is in a calm peaceful state of mind, the wise person thinks well to plan and pursue long-term and broad-range goals at the expense of the pleasures of the moment.

On the other hand, dominated by the heat of the immediate passions, the foolish person sacrifices long-term and long-range benefits for narrow and short-term pleasures. The incentives of the immediate impulses, in Hume's words, have only a "short duration"--they do not last long. But "what is casual and inconstant gives but little joy, and less pride" (T. 293). So, in Hume's view, the foolish sacrifices the greatest good for immediate pleasures. As he argued, "it seems ridiculous to infer an excellency in ourselves from an object, which is of so much shorter duration, and attends us during so small a part of our existence" (T. 293). Hume illustrated the point in the following way. "And however poets may employ their wit and eloquence, celebrating present pleasures, and rejecting all distant views to fame, health, or fortune," Hume writes, "it is obvious, that this practice is the source of all dissoluteness and disorder, repentance and misery" (E. 239). In his view, the person whose character is dominated by violent passions is typically deprived of "all the relish in the common occurrences of life" and is much less able to genuinely enjoy herself than "men of cool and sedate tempers."[55] The incontinent person cannot resist the temptations and pleasures of the moment. But the strong-minded person, controlled by calm passions, has a better chance of pursuing higher enjoyable goals successfully.[56] The effort to cultivate and calm down our natural passions to acquire strong mind, we recall, prepares us with the ability of self-control over the forces of our immediate passions. Lack of the virtue of strong mind, because of the failure to adopt or cultivate a reflective calm disposition or character, reduces our ability to plan well and pursue a well meaningful life. A calm or strong mind makes us happy, for, its effects are "intrinsically satisfying," as Hume put the point.[57]

The point in the foregoing arguments is that, in Hume's moral system, the cultivation of the disposition of calm passion or character is essential to the ability to be masters of our own natural sentiments. The belief that human beings have evaluative reflective capacities that make them agents of what they are underlies the basis of our ordinary judgments of moral responsibility. Hume accepted this ordinary conception of the commerce between moral agency and moral responsibility. We may resist the idea that Hume believed that we have potential capacities to control (and morality indeed requires of us to do so) the manifestations of our passions because it

is tempting to think that Hume rejected this idea in his criticism of rationalists' theory of human nature. Rationalists endorse our commonsense belief that human beings are animals of a unique sort. What sets us apart from the non-human animals consists in the fact that we have capacities to choose courses of actions that override the forces of our passions and desires in preference for a greater good.[58] On this ordinary view that rationalists endorse, according to Terence Penelhum, "we pride ourselves on the supposed fact that when we do this, we exercise the power to be free from the influences and temptations that would otherwise condemn us."[59] Hume did not deny the rationalists' idea that human beings have capacity to control the overriding forces of their inclinations. What Hume rejected in his debate with rationalists was the attribution to reason of the capacity to control the overriding forces of the passions. Hume, in fact, saw it as our moral duty to control the manifestations of our inclinations by examining their consequences carefully before making moral decisions and moral choices. Penelhum has argued for this view persuasively. In reference to rationalists' confidence in our capacity to control our inclinations by our choices and practices, Penelhum argues:

> The rationalist understanding of human nature has a strong hold on the common understanding of our choices. We pride ourselves on the supposed fact that we are able sometimes to choose courses of action that override our passions and desires in the light of a greater good.... Hume denies none of the experiences on which these popular self-estimates depend. We can, and do, choose the good over the attractive and resist many of the passions that agitate us. We are, indeed, entitled to talk of ourselves as acting freely on many such occasions.... And we do, indeed, choose many actions because they are our duty, even though they do not appeal to us, and our society depends for its health on the fact that we do this. But none of these familiar experiences is to be interpreted in the way rationalists interpret them.[60]

Hume agreed with rationalists that human beings have abilities to control the manifestations of their sentiments. What he rejected was the belief that it is reason that triumph over passions the occasions when we obtain control over our desires and other inclinations. Instead, Hume attributed the ability of self-control to passions of the "second order".

We find it difficult accepting Hume as believing that morality requires of us to step back, reflect and critically examine the effects of our immediate passions because we ordinarily attribute that function to reasoning. But we are familiar with the view that Hume denied the rationalists' conception of the capacity for reflective evaluation of our desires as a pure rational faculty. For rationalists, the ability to think and make decisions to control our desires is a function that belongs *exclusively* to the intellectual faculty called "reason" (as contrasted with the sensible faculty that Hume identified as the reflective passions).[61] But Hume did not accept this. On his study of the mind and the causal motivations of human actions, he rejected rationalists' idea that the capacity for reflective evaluation of our desires and passions is a privileged function of

reason. On his view, any attribution to reason of the capacity to control the passions is fundamentally mistaken. Since we ordinarily assume that every calm disposition is the determination of reason, according to Hume, "every action of the mind, which operates with the same calmness and tranquillity, is confounded with reason by all those, who judge of things from the first view and appearance" (T. 417). That is, "when any of these passions are calm, and cause no disorder in the soul, they are very readily taken for the determinations of reason and are supposed to proceed from the same faculty, with that, which judges of truth and falsehood" (*ibid).* The mistake arises, according to Hume's account, because we tend to think that calm and steady state of minds are nothing but a victory of reason over the passions. We tend to forget, that "there are certain calm desires and tendencies, which, tho' they be real passions, which produce little emotion in the mind, and are more known by their effects than by the immediate feeling or sensation" (*ibid.*).

It is misleading to confound Hume's debate with moral rationalists as a rejection of the role of reflective thinking in moral decisions and actions. Since he was critical of the front-line role that rationalists ascribe to reason, we may be misled to think he allowed no room for reflective thinking in moral deliberations and practices. His critical argument might be understood as a rejection of rationalist's view that, to decide and act well, the tendencies of our immediate passions need to be controlled. On deeper observation, it is obvious in his moral system that Hume never at all denied the commonsense fact that left to their free operations, the passions, on most occasions, deflect us from the course of morality. This view, Hume granted rationalists.[62] He, in fact, accepted the view that, by themselves, the passions usually do not only have contrary motivations, but may also defeat the purpose and principles of morality. He believed that by cultivating and conditioning the passions through habituation, we acquire a moral character or disposition to act virtuously by redirecting the original passions into steady and calm dispositions or character. On this suggestion, he was in agreement with rationalists. The question of how to calm down the passions into a stable principle of action is Hume's point of departure from rationalists. The view that Hume rejected involved rationalists' attribution of the job to the privileged function of reason. On the contrary, Hume argued that a steady calm disposition of the mind is nothing but the operation of *reflective passions*. The calm disposition of the mind that gives us the disposition not to be over-ruled by the violent forces of our immediate passions or impulses, on Hume's view, is not the operation of reason but calm reflective passions. On Hume's thought, reason cannot oppose passion. The choices we make in our lives involve one passion overcoming another passion; it is not reason that overcomes the passions. In choices between conflicting desires, such as to eat the ice cream or to commit to our desire to slim down, it is the

stronger passions that overcome and control the mind. The strong disposition that we have cultivated through, for example, the effort of self-discipline in our practices, puts us in a better position to overpower the overriding forces of our immediate desires and make better choices. A state of mind may become a settled calm disposition when it is conditioned through training or habituation; we obtain self-control when the reflective passions overpower the agitating or disconcerting passions. The reflective capacity leads us to deliberate and evaluate the consequences of acting upon the agitating sentiments. Of course, his rationalists' counterparts in the debate may claim that virtues are effects of our rational deliberation, not passions. But Hume responded that the debate is merely a verbal dispute, for what rationalists call "rational deliberation" is nothing but "reflective passions." Hence, nothing has been proved against his claim.

Thus, we must be careful not to confuse Hume's concept of *reflective passions* for *reflective reasoning*. The reflective passions that he conceived of as the causal motivations of our moral actions are sentiments. They are second-order passions that we acquire by redirecting and habituating the original passions. By contrast, reflective reasoning is a computational cognitive instrument. As we noted in chapter three, reflective reason, in Hume's moral thought, functions as a cognitive instrument that *advises* (but does not *motivate*) us about the efficient means of optimally realizing our desires. I argued also that, contrary to the view of some critics (such as Smith and Hampton), the secondary role of reflective reason in Hume's moral system consists in the normative function of advising us of the right desirable projects that are morally worth of pursuing. But we must note that all these theoretical functions of reflective reasoning are distinguishable from motivating reasons. Hume's concepts of reflective passions are connected with motivating reasons, not normative reasons, though both instruments play essential roles in his moral theory. Reflective passions or motivating reasons are the active psychological principles that, in Hume's moral thought, causally determine or motivate our moral behaviors. Reflective or normative reason, by contrast, provides us with theoretical advice. Thus, by insisting that Hume grounded his moral theory in reflective passions, I am not interpreting him as a rationalist. I am claiming that Hume's moral theory is grounded in *reflective passions* but I am *not* claiming the view that his moral theory is grounded in *reflective reasoning*. Reflective passions are, on Hume's view, a judgment directed by feelings. This is contrasted with the rationalist account of reflective reasoning that involves calculation and inferences. I turn in the next discussion to call to attention the mechanism that Hume suggested as the means by which we actualize our potential capacities into calm moral dispositions or sentiments to pursue virtuous meaningful life.

4.2. MORAL HABITUATION

In what specific way can we control and calm down the overriding forces of our natural sentiments to overcome and, subsequently, gain control over the mind? This section outlines and defends Hume's particular view of how our potential capacities are actualized through training and practice, or what we generally describe as "habituation." We shall see Hume's belief that our potential capacities are actualized and empowered, depending on how we condition and habituate the mind through training and practice. Habituation is fundamental to Hume's belief in how the mind is conditioned and empowered to deal with its manifestations in action. In other words, habituation forms a crucial component of the means by which Hume thought the immediate tendencies of the passions are rehabilitated and stabilized into a steady and calm (stable) moral disposition or character. On Hume's suggestion, the stabilization of the passions is principally possible through practice or habituation. We acquire stable and calm dispositions or characters to act virtuously through habituation. He attributed to the effects of habit and custom our moral beliefs and practices. He often used the notions of "habit" and "custom" synonymously to imply regularity of behavior or constant practice. He believed that, through constant practice, we train or habituate the passions by increasing or decreasing the intensity of their disposition to cause pain or pleasure. He even thought that, through practice, we acquire the ability to develop the disposition that enables us to redirect impressions of pain into pleasure. As he argued, "nothing has a greater effect both to increase and diminish our passions, to convert pleasure to pain and pain into pleasure, than custom and repetition" (T. 422).[63]

The principle of habit or custom is a fundamental doctrine in Hume's philosophy. In the first book of the *Treatise*, we learn that the fundamental importance of habit and custom do not only lie in our cognitive life; habits are constitutive parts of our sympathetic responses and ethical relations. In this regard, Hume maintained that "the far greatest part of our reasonings, with all our actions and passions, can be deriv'd from nothing but custom and habit" (T. 118). Describing them as "a permanent, irresistible, and universal" law of causes and effects, Hume regarded the principles of habit and custom as the "foundation of all our thoughts and actions, so that upon their removal human nature must immediately perish and go to ruin" (T. 225). This was the fundamental principle he appealed to in the first book of the *Treatise* to ground our causal beliefs, after denying that beliefs can be strictly proved and justified rationally in the strict logical sense. He consistently employed the same principle, both in the first and second books, to justify our moral practices, after denying rationalists' principle. Section V, Part III, of the third book of the *Treatise* titled "Of the effects of Custom" contains specific suggestions of how the passions can

be trained and controlled into a steady calm mental disposition. In his discussion, Hume specified two main contributions of habit to the development of calm passions or character. He wrote:

> Custom has two *original* effects upon the mind, in bestowing a *facility* in the performance of any action or the conception of any object; and afterwards a *tendency* or *inclination* towards it; and from these we may account for all its other effects, however extraordinary" (T. 422; italic in the original).[64]

Hume emphasized the same idea in the next two pages.

> But custom not only gives a facility to perform any action, but likewise an inclination and tendency towards it, where it is not entirely disagreeable, and can never be the object of inclination. And this is the reason why custom increases all *active* habits, but diminishes *passive*, according to the observation of a late eminent philosopher. The facility takes off from the force of the passive habits by rendering the motion of the spirits faint and languid (T. 424, italics in the original).

Concerning the first contribution of habit to the formation of calm dispositions, Hume claimed that custom or habit helps us to *conceive* or form the appropriate objects of desires. He emphasized this idea in another place. "Custom also, or acquaintance facilitates the entrance, and strengthens the *conception* of any object. And as *reasoning and education* concur only in producing a lively and strong idea of any object; so is this the only particular, which is common to relation and acquaintance" (T. 353, my emphasis).

About the second contribution, Hume's argument indicates that through practice, we develop the disposition to be both interested in moral issues and the ability to perform them. By practice, we dispose ourselves to acquire the taste to be interested in fulfilling moral demands. This is a correction and improvement upon our original selfish and shortsighted interests. Hume believed that by nature we have only limited abilities to execute even the little amount of confined benevolence with which we were naturally endowed. As he argued, naturally, "the qualities of the mind are *selfishness* and *limited generosity*."[65] Our natural benevolent sentiments are restricted to our close or immediate relations; it is only in a small measure that our generosity or benevolence extends beyond our immediate family. Hume illustrated his argument in the following way. "Now it appears that in the original frame of our mind, our strongest attention is confin'd to ourselves; our next is extended to our relations and acquaintance; and 'tis only the weakest which reaches to strangers and indifferent persons"(T. 488). So, on Hume's thought, our natural generosities exclude foreigners as well as our fellow citizens who live outside the "narrow circle" of our families and friends. Hume emphasized the point in his discussion "Of the goodness of benevolence." "When experience has once given us a competent knowledge of human affairs, and has thought us the proportion they bear to human passion, we perceive, that the generosity of

men is very limited and that it seldom extends beyond their friends and family, or at most, beyond their native country." (T. 602).

The passages support the view that Hume construed our natural motivations as principally directed by shortsighted goals and self-regarding interests. But it is important to emphasize that Hume did not consider as moral, the motivations of our original human nature; he saw an inverse relation between the direction of our natural propensities and moral demands. As the passages indicate, he believed that, naturally, our sympathetic judgments are easily and usually attracted and engaged by events within our close proximity. But he argued that, through reflective evaluation and training, we develop moral sentiments that enable us to order the manifestations of our natural sentiments towards a moral direction. The sympathetic sentiments need to be trained and conditioned before they can steer us in the right moral direction. Sometimes they can misinform us. In many occasions, they do not extend beyond our immediate precincts. They are often stimulated and enticed by events that are spatially and temporally within close proximity to us than events that are far from us, in terms of time and geographical location. On occasion, our sympathetic judgments can have an inverse relation with the moral point of view; for example, we can be deceived when we do not pause to reflect and think carefully about the first appearance to us of a very charming character.[66]

However, in Hume's moral thought, sympathetic judgments, when trained and conditioned, can be broadened to respond to impersonal or other-regarding concerns. Proximity in terms of space and location can be transcended when we are placed to make judgments that affect others. On Hume's suggestion, "when any work is addressed to the public, though I should have a friendship or enmity with the author, I must depart from this situation; and considering myself as a man in general, forget, if possible, my individual being and my peculiar circumstances."[67] In moral judgments, we need to reflectively survey carefully objects of our judgments.[68] In character appreciation, a critic "must preserve his mind from all *prejudice*, and allow nothing to enter into his consideration, but the very object which is submitted to his examination...."[69] We are able to do these by learning to imaginatively place ourselves in the victim's circumstance to understand and share her pain by asking how we would feel if we were in a similar situation.[70] This enables us to appreciate and form objective sympathetic judgments about moral matters that go beyond the borders of our country, provided we are well conditioned and correctly informed of the facts.[71] When the sentiments are well trained, they enable a character that is far remote from us (beyond our immediate family and social settings) to attract our approbation and condemnation. Having been trained, Hume argued, "if you represent a tyrannical, insolent or barbarous behaviour, in any country or in any age of the world, I soon carry my eyes to the pernicious

tendency of such a conduct, and feel the sentiment of repugnance and displeasure towards it. No character can be so remote as to be, in this light, wholly indifferent to me" (E 273). That is, someone placed in a circumstance to make a judgment about an issue pertaining to "different age or nation, who should peruse this discourse, must have all these circumstances in his eye, and must place himself in the same situation as the audience, in order to form a true judgment of the oration."[72] All these require training and practice. To judge morally and objectively, we must learn to stand firm and impartially to carefully examine immediate attractive characters before passing any judgment about them. Moral judgments require reflective judgments rather than hasty judgements. We need not always allow immediate attractive characters and experiences to determine our judgments. Immediate appearances can be deceptive. The particular way that a character or a person appears to our immediate senses (in the first instance) may sometimes be deceptive (or misleadingly attractive). Therefore, we need to correct our immediate perceptions and sentiments, through learning, practice, and critical evaluation, before passing any judgment about a moral character or situation; moral judgments must pass an impartial test. This requires a careful reflection and training of our original sentiments that are, as we have seen, often easily overwhelmed and motivated by immediate attractions.

Through training and practice, we acquire dexterity to perform both extensive benevolent actions and projects that have long run and long-range expected utilities. Consider Hume's view of the importance of practice. "So advantageous is practice to the discernment of beauty, that, before we can give judgment on any work of importance, it will even be requisite, that that very individual performance be more than once perused by us, and be surveyed in different lights with attention and deliberation."[73] Practice empowers and gives us proficiency (ability) to perform and fulfill virtuous moral goals. The fact is that not all objects of desires are morally worthy of pursuing. But through constant practice, we can train and educate ourselves to develop the ability to fulfill (perform) morally worthy ground projects. All jobs require experience, skill and proficiency in their effective and successful performance, and Hume is telling us that morality is not an exception.

Hume's view of the need for our natural dispositions to be trained for an effective moral performance was clearly developed in his paper, "Of the Standard of Taste." [74] He defended the view that through training and practice, we learn to agree with each other, despite our disagreements. "But though there be naturally a wide difference in point of delicacy between one person and another, nothing tends further to encrease and improve this talent, than *practice* in a particular art, and the frequent survey or contemplation of a particular species of beauty."[75] The abilities that we acquire through habituation are comparable to the skills that we acquire from

other training schemes. We go to college to acquire skills that increase (improve) our reasoning abilities and job performances. In the education process, we are trained by teachers. Though the skills we acquire are shaped by what we learn from the teachers, in our job performance, we do not credit or blame the teachers for our success or failures. How well we do in our job performance is entirely up to us. The same is true with the moral character that we acquire through external influences, such as education from our parents, society, friends and the like. We learn and habituate ourselves by internalizing the values of the community into which we happen to be thrown. Yet, how well we perform is entirely up to us.

Now, how consistent is my argument that Hume grounded morality in habit with my account that he conceived of moral lives and conduct as requiring reflection and critical evaluation to redirect the manifestations of our first-order passions? This question is important because one might think that, by claiming that we conduct our moral lives and practices through habit, Hume defended the view that we act non-reflectively on natural impulses. This objection might be defended because we generally construe habitual actions as unreflective instinctual behaviors. I do not think Hume denied this. But in his moral thought, the *process* by which our moral character becomes naturalized as steady and calm dispositions involves reflective evaluation to have reason for accepting or rejecting what we have been habituated to be, for example, by our parents and culture. A habitual way of life is certainly non-deliberative, but the process by which it becomes naturalized and instinctive as a regular (routine) way of life involves conscious deliberations. At some point in the process by which we acquire our moral character, especially when we reach mature adult age, we must ask ourselves why we prefer to lead this particular way of life. Certainly, not all people are reflective enough to question and re-think about their family and social values. But we live in a multicultural "global village", so to speak, which imposes on us the inevitability of questioning our values. We cannot avoid re-evaluating our own values since we have contacts with people with different values, beliefs and convictions which are sometimes different from those of our own. We work, go to school, go to church, and live with people who come from different families, cultures, societies, and religions, and whose values may vary from ours. We hear about different values systems and beliefs through travels and various information media, such as the radio, television, the Internet. Contacts of these sorts have an inevitable tendency to raise in our minds various questions about our own values. They are alternative values that naturally cause us to compare, assess, affirm and obtain solid grounds for our beliefs and convictions. A morally mature person has grounds for her convictions, beliefs and prejudices. As Bertrand Russell argues, a person who does not question the grounds of his convictions "goes through life imprisoned in the prejudices derived from commonsense, from the

habitual beliefs of his age or his nation, and from convictions which have grown up in his mind without the co-operation of his deliberate reason."[76]

My point is this. Though practically some people are not reflective enough to question their own values and the family way in which they were brought up, we judge them as responsible for what they are because we assume correctly that they have potential reflective capacities to determine their own way of life. Unless constrained by certain irresistible conditions, such as psychological incapacitation, the failure to cultivate one's potential abilities is not an excuse for one's responsibility for her character. (We shall see Hume's argument on this issue in chapter five.) Undoubtedly, most of our regular ways of living are non-deliberative; our routine moral practices are not, for the most part, purely deliberative. For example, in our ordinary moral practices, morally literate persons do not often ask time to perform geometric calculation, so to speak, before treating others with respect and dignity. We move among people, even in crowded shopping centers, without deliberating whether we should shove them aside, or whether to tell the truth when asked for the time of the day.[77] Though our habituated mature moral lives are non-deliberative, morally literate persons are conscious of the particular nature (good or bad) of their moral characters and have reasons for leading or trying not to lead that kind of life. Responses like "This is the way I was brought up" are not acceptable answers to questions, such as "What is the reason for believing or living this way?" The same reply is also not a legitimate answer to the question "Why do you hold this belief and attitude towards certain class of people, such as women and blacks. We reject excuses like these because we consider a person as capable of choosing his own ways of life, apart from how she was brought up. As I will defend in chapter six, as a social institution, morality requires of us to live in conformity to social conventions and expectations. But we are sensible of, and have reasons for, why we should do this. We do not live a regular cooperative routine way of life without having thought of why we should do so. The internalization of social and moral values through habituation, in the adult age, in a way, requires reflective evaluation to make a decision about what we are or desire (want) to be.

Attention needs to be called to the view that Hume really conceived some habitual characters as self-reflective principled ways of life. On this view, he followed one of the basic teachings of the eighteenth-century school of the "moral sense." Both Francis Hutcheson and Joseph Butler, two prominent figures of the moral sense school, considered moral lives as directed by principles of habit acquired through practice and reflection. A parallel passage that I quoted earlier, in which Hume argued that through the principles of habit we acquire facility to perform praiseworthy moral actions, can be found in both Butler and Hutcheson.[78] Consider

Hutcheson's parallel argument. "We obtain *Command* over the *particular* Passions, principally by strengthening the *general Desires* through frequent Reflection, and making them habitual, so as to obtain strength superior to the *particular passions.*[79] Butler also wrote:

> By accustoming ourselves to any Course of Action, we get an Aptness to go on, a Facility, Readiness and often Pleasure, in it. The Inclinations which rendered is averse to it, grow weaker: the Difficulties in it, not only imaginary but real ones, lessen: the Reasons for it, offer themselves of course to our Thoughts upon all Occasions: and the least Glimpse of them is sufficient to make us go on, in a Course of Action, to which we have been accustomed (Joseph Butler's *Works*1874, vol. 1, p. 91).

In Butler's account, habit and conscience are not separable. Conscience is a reflective mental faculty by which we instinctively discern our moral duties. But this faculty must not be confounded with intuition; awareness by conscience, for Butler, is not the same as immediate (inward) awareness by intuition. In contrast with intuitive judgments involving immediate awareness, conscience, at least as Butler conceived it, is a reflective capacity aroused by feelings towards an object that exists in the external world. Describing what he calls, "the natural faculty of conscience," he remarks, "there is a principle of reflection in men, by which they distinguish between, approve and disapprove their actions."[80] Hume agreed with Butler and Hutcheson's conception of habit as a self-reflective principled way of life. They all believed that by disposing ourselves to the habit of reflecting upon the consequences of our desires, we acquire the ability of self-control to overcome the overriding forces of our natural tendencies.

As we saw in our previous discussions, it was Hume's considered view that in our moral practices, we need to think and reflect on the effects of our immediate impulses to redirect their manifestations into a moral direction. As we daily and routinely go through a particular reflective way of life, it eventually becomes naturalized into a principled character. In this sense, it invariably becomes a habitual way of life. Afterwards, we may not need to sit down, think and reflect every time before *knowing* the effects of a particular passion. We simply know them by experience. We subsequently act in automatic response based on our past knowledge. This idea is consistent with Hume's belief that our epistemic and moral practices are determined by the habit of the mind that we acquire on the basis of past experience. We judge and act instinctively from habit based on our past knowledge. We may not need to reflect before being ware of this knowledge, typically knowledge of the causal effects of a particular act. By our regular practices, they are naturally known to us without conscious reflection, that is, we know them instinctively. This is what Hume meant by some of his remarks that we act in automatic response to the principles of our human nature.[81] As he argued: "what we have frequently performed from certain motives, we are apt, likewise to continue mechanically, without recalling, on every occasion, the

reflections, which first determined us" (E. 203). Or as he put it in another language, "we are not, in every instance, conscious of any immediate reflection on the pernicious consequences" of our acts (E. 203). Hume tells us in the passage that, though our routine (regular) and habitual ways of life are mechanical, they were determined in this way by our past reflective experiences and practices. We often act instinctively on the basis of our past experiences, just as we naturally judge instinctively based on the motivation of our past knowledge of repeated instances.

The discussion in this section implicitly distinguishes between two stages of moral habituation: (a) habituation through parental upbringing, and (b) self-habituation through a person's own choices and practices. The training we receive from the early stages of our lives prepares us to discover and develop (cultivate) our natural and potential talents or abilities. But this does not fix forever our moral character, a disposition that reveals who we are. A good training or habituation of a child prepares her to develop her potential capacities. We train children to develop reflective critical minds that enable them to be independent individuals in the determination (choice) of what they want to be, when they reach an adult life. This shores up my argument that a habituating process involves the development and actualization of our potential reflective capacities. Adult moral agents are responsible for what they are because, in our judgments, we assume that they have reflective abilities to think about what they want to be, or why they have to go along with the values that were inculcated in them in their pre-adult age. Children are not morally responsible agents because they do not have fully developed reflective capacities to understand, assess, and control the consequences of their actions. They act instinctively according to their first-order or biological instincts. But mature people are, to a greater degree, "autonomous" moral agents who are required by morality to develop their potential abilities to make right moral decisions and choices. Autonomy requires that agents deliberate upon the values they are given and either make them their own or have a sensible reason for choosing different ways of life. Of course, many of the values that we endorse are given to us by background institutions; we absorb them from various sources of contacts in the social order: family values, religious values, cultural values, friends, colleagues and the like. But when they reach responsible adult age, morally mature agents question and find out the "supporting rationale" of their way of life, for we are aware that we are judged as agents of what we are.[82]

Adults are morally mature because, based on their past experiences, they have a stronger disposition to know how to control their sentiments. As we noted earlier, Hume drew a close connection between the ability of self-control and the disposition to pursue a virtuous life. Knowing how to control our selves in the right degree in the appropriate circumstance disposes a

person to the possibility of avoiding situations and tempers that may lead him into trouble. As Hume argued, "by degrees the repetition produces a facility which is another very powerful principle of the human mind, and an infallible source of pleasure, where the facility goes not beyond a certain degree" (T. 423). Self-discipline helps us to control our emotions in an orderly virtuous manner. The person who has trained himself to acquire self-control over his sentiments knows the limits within which he exercises his courageous virtues. In Hume's view, a self-disciplined sentiment is a disposition "so powerful as even to convert pain into pleasure, and give us a relish in time for what at first was most harsh and disagreeable" (T. 423). By training ourselves to be disciplined individuals, we acquire control over our sentiments. We are therefore in position to determine what we are. Thus, training and habituation is a mechanism by which we develop our potential abilities to be masters of our choices.

To sum up, I have argued in this paper that Hume believed that through training and practice, we develop our potential reflective capacities to control our natural propensities and determine what we want to be. The argument also defends Hume as believing that we determine what we are by our choices and practices. I defended the argument by claiming that Hume's distinction between primary passions and secondary passions anticipated current distinction between first-order and second-order passions. The distinction is helpful in understanding Hume's view of the source of our moral responsibility. We noted from Hume the view that human agents have higher-level evaluating cognitive capacities that enable them to reflect and understand the consequences of their actions. This is why Hume predicated moral responsibility upon self-conscious premeditated actions. He believed that "men are not blamable for such actions as they perform ignorantly and casually....Men are less blamed for such actions as they perform hastily and unpremeditatedly than for such actions as they proceed from deliberation" (E. 98). We judge people as responsible for their actions because they possess the ability to deliberate upon the causal effects of their actions. We are certainly sentient creatures created with instinctive desires. But we are also moral agents who have deliberative faculty to step back from our first-order inclinations and reflect upon their causal impacts before acting upon them. I have insisted on a Humean view that we require practice and training to acquire the dexterity to be able to step back from our first-order inclinations and calm down our natural dispositions to choose the morally virtuous course of actions. By our routine practices we habituate ourselves in a new way to shape and determine what we are. But how is this Humean view consistent with Hume's naturalistic belief that human beings are part of the causal order regulated by the laws of nature? The idea that what we are, morally, is determined by our choices and practices seems to be inconsistent with the naturalistic view that human actions are causally determined by the laws of nature. The

former view seems to be a "voluntarist" or libertarian view of human agency, and the latter a deterministic view. We shall see in the next chapter a Humean argument that the two are not inconsistent. We shall see the argument in the context of Hume's reconciliatory account of compatibility between libertarianism and determinism.

Chapter 5

HUME AND THE PROBLEM OF MORAL LUCK AND MORAL CONTINGENCIES

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is continuous with the discussion we began in chapter four involving Hume's view of how moral character is acquired and the problem that it poses to judgments of moral responsibility. We noted in the preceding chapter Hume's belief that through training and practice, we reform and develop our potential capacities and choose to be what we are. In this chapter, I follow up the argument to call attention to Hume's view of how we respond to issues of contingencies and luck in our judgments of moral responsibility. Let me clarify this. I am not going to reject the view that luck poses a serious challenge to judgments of moral responsibility. Our ordinary moral judgments are not perfect; they are often coarse grained rather than fine grained. Instead, the discussion calls to attention Hume's suggestion of how we respond and deal with the problem in our moral judgments. That is, I argue that Hume has an account of how to deal with the problem of luck in our judgments of moral responsibility. The discussion is divided into three main sections. The first, "The Problem of Moral Luck," outlines and rejects an interpretation of Hume's view of moral sentiments that leads to the conclusion that he construed moral character as moral dispositions that we acquire by the fate or luck. The second section, titled "A Humean Response," defends Hume as acknowledging the problem of luck and other contingencies in our ordinary moral lives. It then calls attention to Hume's view of how we deal with the problem in our judgments of moral responsibility. The third section, "The Alleged inalterability of Natural Sentiments," rejects the often asserted view that, in Hume's moral system, we cannot "correct" our natural sentiments, especially our basic desires. It also clarifies what Hume specifically meant by his references to natural traits, such as a good sense of humor, as inalterable natural dispositions.

5.1. *THE PROBLEM OF MORAL LUCK*

We noted in chapter four the view that Hume grounded morality in second-order reflective dispositions, not in our original first-order sentiments. The argument rejects standard interpretations of Hume's view of *moral* dispositions to consist in *natural* (original) sentiments.

The following discussion defends the objection more explicitly to respond to the problem of luck that the standard interpretation leads to. The idea that Hume grounded morality in our natural or original sentiments leads to a misleading conclusion that our judgments of moral responsibility are incoherent because we tend to blame and hold people responsible for characters that they happened to have only by the misfortune of fate. The problem originates from an interpretation of Hume's view of moral sentiments that was pioneered by Norman Kemp Smith in the beginning of the twentieth century. The stage for current interpretation of Hume as a naturalist who believed that the way we think and behave are causally determined by our sentiments was initiated in 1905 by Norman Kemp Smith's ground-breaking paper "The Naturalism of David Hume."[1] In his interpretation of Hume as a naturalist, Smith attempts to correct the assessment of Hume's intellectual contribution solely in terms of his rejection of rationalistic philosophical systems. Smith argues that the apparent negative approach of Hume's philosophy is a strategy he adopted in his effort to reconstruct rationalists' views regarding the warranted basis of our epistemic and moral practices in naturalistic terms.[2] That is, Hume denied the rationalists' view that our beliefs and actions require rational justifications.[3] Instead, Smith thinks Hume considered our beliefs and actions as warranted by our sentiments.

First, it must be acknowledged that Smith's interpretation is illuminating. It initiated the effort to correct a two-century one-sided emphasis on Hume's skeptical philosophical strategy without recognizing its positive implications. Smith's account also captures correctly Hume's naturalistic view that our sentiments (passions) are the *motivating* forces of our moral actions. Smith's interpretation also helps us see clearly the close relation that Hume drew between our sentiments and our character.[4] Hume often described character traits as durable and persisting passions.[5] He drew a close relation between sentiments and character based on his conviction that, through regular conduct and practices, our sentiments tend to become a "persistent" and settled disposition that controls the regular ways we act and conduct our lives (T. 419). He described character as a durable and constant disposition that reflects the moral quality of a person (or who a person is) (T. 411, 477). He generally believed that what we are is defined by our psychological dispositions (sentiments) or character. In his moral system, we assess the moral status of a person's action in terms of the sentiment or character that produced it. According to his view, "[i]f any action be either virtuous or vicious, 'tis only as a sign of some quality or character. It must depend upon durable principles of the mind, which extend over the whole conduct, and enter into the personal character" (T. 575). Or, as he frequently put it,

> "[a]ctions are by their very nature temporary and perishing; and where they proceed not from some cause in the character and disposition of the person, who perform'd them, they

> infix not in themselves upon him, and can neither redound to his honour, if good, nor infamy, if evil" (T. 411).[6]

Now, the question is, in Hume's view, how do we acquire *moral sentiments* or character? The question is about how *moral dispositions* (sentiments) are formed, but not about how we acquire our *natural sentiments.* Problems about Hume's account of moral dispositions are often raised in the context of his views on how a moral character is formed.[7] On the standard view, Hume conceived of a moral character as an involuntarily acquired unalterable natural disposition or sentiment.[8] According to this view, Hume considered moral character as a complex of natural abilities that are not chosen or developed on our own. This view is supported by a conclusion that Smith draws from his naturalistic interpretation of Hume's moral sense theory. Construing them as original existents, according to Smith's account, Hume thought passions cannot be changed or developed by any means. He writes: "According to Hume, all the passions, both direct and indirect, are ultimate and unanalysable. No passion can through association or any other means be *developed out of, or transformed into, any other passions.*"[9] Smith supports the view by arguing that, in Hume's thought, "each passion imperiously demands the satisfaction of its instinct, and carries no reference to any reality beyond."[10] On this account, the natural manifestations or forces of passions and our human nature determine what we are. Therefore, they are the forces that determine the way we act and behave, morally.

Smith's account is almost a century old. However, it initiated a path for the standard understanding of Hume that continues today. Paul Russell's comprehensive discussion of Hume's theory of moral responsibility in his book, *Freedom and Moral Sentiment: Hume's Way of Naturalizing Responsibility* (1995), follows a similar line of interpretation of Hume's concept of moral sentiment that Smith initiated. Russell accepts the view that moral responsibility is, in Hume's moral thought, determined by moral sentiments or character.[11] But when exploring the issue whether our moral character is acquired voluntarily, Russell, in chapter nine of his book, "The involuntary nature of Moral Character," argues rigorously that Hume considered character traits (whether virtuous or vicious) as not dispositions that are shaped and conditioned by our own choices and willings. He writes: "Our character is not, Hume maintains, acquired through our own choices and decisions."[12] Rather, Russell thinks Hume urged moral sentiments to "be considered as a 'given' of our human nature."[13] So, on Hume's view, according to Russell's account, "no amount of philosophical reflection and training--including Hume's own theorizing on this subject--can change this basic fact about human beings…Hume takes the view that we can do little or nothing to alter or change our basic moral character."[14]

Russell supports his argument by referring us to Book III, Part III, Section IV of the *Treatise* that Hume titled "Of natural Abilities," as well as Appendix IV of the *Enquiry* titled "Of Some Verbal Disputes." In these passages, Hume remarked that a distinction between moral virtues and natural abilities appears to be a mere verbal dispute.[15] Russell interprets Hume's remark to imply the claim that, for Hume, moral dispositions and natural abilities are on "the same footing."[16] Russell concludes that, besides the problem that it poses to issues of moral responsibility, "Hume's view that moral character is involuntarily acquired raises the more general problem of moral luck," particularly, "constitutive luck."[17] By this, Russell means that, in Hume's moral system, the kind of person we turn out to be is a matter of luck. So, given Hume's view that who we are (i.e., how our character is constituted) is a matter of fortune (or misfortune), and that since people's character are shaped by external factors beyond their control, we can do nothing but sympathize with a criminal as only "morally at the mercy of fate."[18] The alleged problem of moral luck involves the contention that, fundamentally, there is something unavoidably incoherent about our ordinary judgments of moral responsibility. In Thomas Nagel's account that Russell follows, moral luck involves cases where our conception of moral agency and moral judgments pull apart. In our ordinary intuition, we rightly see it as unfair to hold someone accountable for things that are determined beyond his power (ability) to control. Yet, many of the things for which, in our proper thinking, we deem people responsible are things that are often determined by unavoidable factors over which they have no control.

Russell distinguishes the problem of constitutive luck that Hume's account poses to judgments of moral responsibility from other forms of moral luck, typically, "consequential luck" and "circumstantial luck."[19] These labels, Russell adopts by following the lead of Nagel's argument that natural objects of moral assessments are constrained by luck in at least four disturbing ways.[20] As Nagel conceives it, consequential luck involves two kinds of fates that apply to the causes and effects of actions.[21] They include (a) actions constrained by a chain of antecedent causal factors: "luck in how one is determined by antecedent circumstances;" and (b) luck pertaining to the results of one's action: "luck in the way one's actions and projects turn out."[22] Circumstantial luck also refers to the problems and situations that a person faces in a particular circumstance. Together, they all involve a common problem, namely, "the condition of control."[23] This refers to the view that objects for which people are morally judged are often determined in many ways by factors beyond their control. In the strictest sense, Russell joins alliance with Nagel to argue that the condition-of-control seems to invalidate and erode our assessment of the moral culpability of a person. Russell indicates in his account that Hume, in a way, addressed the problems of circumstantial and consequential lucks but he could not answer adequately the

problem of constitutive luck. That is, Russell thinks constitutive luck poses an insuperable problem for Hume's view of judgments of moral responsibility.[24] "As regards 'constitutive luck'", Russell argues, "it is plainly Hume's view that we are all subject to 'moral luck' in *this* respect."[25] Russell implies the view that Hume was committed to the belief that "by and large, we have little or no control over the kind of person that we turn out to be" (*ibid.*). In essence, Russell's objection to Hume's view concerning the commerce between moral agency and moral responsibility is that Hume does not have a coherent theory of moral responsibility. For, it does not make sense to claim that a person is morally responsible for a character that she did not acquire by her own will.

Russell suggests in his account that Hume could avoid the problem of moral luck if he took the distinction between first-order and second-order desires seriously. That is, on one count, Russell acknowledges Hume's anticipation of the recent belief in the capacity for second-order sentiments that provide us with a control over our natural dispositions. Russell writes:

> Over the past two decades or so a number of writers have developed alternative account of how it is that moral agent can be said to have some control or influence over her moral character. In general terms, the thesis is that human beings have a capacity to reflect on their desires and willings (i.e., those desires that are effective in action), and they can form second order desires about what (first-order) desires and willings they entertain or act on.... 'Two-level' theories of this sort are, obviously, in line with Hume's general position on this subject insofar as they do not suggest that indeterminism is required for moral agency.[26]

Russell is arguing that Hume believed that we have reflective capacities to control some of our natural propensities but this by no means implies that Hume construed our moral characters as completely determined by our own will.[27] Russell explains in the following way what he means by his idea that Hume subscribed to the "two level theories." "Hume can (and does) readily accept that human beings are capable, on occasion, of 'reforming' themselves and that they may self-consciously and successfully cultivate good dispositions and inclinations. Second-order desires, in other words, certainly have some influence on (some people's) moral development and character traits."[28] Russell asks us not to press the connection too far, for in his view, the space that Hume assigned for evaluative reflection was very limited. He argues:

> I think that Hume's position is plainly at odds with two-level theories in some important respects...Hume suggests that the influence of critical reflection of this nature is rather limited--even for those (few) individuals who are disposed through philosophy to give proper care and attention to these matters.[29]

Hume did not emphasize the role of reflective evaluation in human agency, according to Russell's account, because he believed that the libertarian account "tends to *exaggerate* the roles of second-order reflection in moral life."[30] Hume believed that the libertarian account overrates our capacity for reflective evaluation based on their incoherent belief that we are "self-made selves,"[31] Russell

maintains. Against this view, Russell contends that Hume believed that "moral character is very largely determined and conditioned by factors that are quite independent of the agent, and any effort to change or alter our moral character in fundamental respects is difficult and rarely achieved."[32] Russell concludes that, regarding the formation of moral character, there is no way Hume could avoid "constitutive luck" problem, for "there is, as it were, no escaping of the grip of 'fate'." [33]

5.2. *A HUMEAN RESPONSE TO THE CONDITION-OF-CONTROL-PROBLEM*

I begin my response to the problem by acknowledging the view that luck and other involuntary contingencies raise a deep challenge to the notions of moral agency and moral responsibility. The issue of luck is a difficult moral problem because it raises a dilemma about our fundamental beliefs about free agency and moral responsibility. Luck is a real phenomenon in our daily lives. We often have no choice of the moral circumstances that we face. Some people are confronted with heavy freighted moral situations, and given the nature of the situation, they perform badly.[34] In our moral judgments, we sometimes grade some people less good or less admirable, given our experience of their character and moral performance (behavior), than others who are really no better, but who through good fortune were not challenged (or less challenged).[35] For example, a truck driver parks on a slightly incline and rushes to a convenience store neglecting to set the hand brake. The truck slips and seriously damages a parking meter, but he is less reprimanded than another truck driver who goes through a similar experience but his truck slips and kills a child on a scooter.[36] Also, just by living at an unlucky time or being in the wrong place at the wrong time may expose a person to a moral reproach. For example, those who did not live in Nazi Germany in Hitler's era had lesser opportunities for wrongdoing.[37] Had Hitler died of a heart attack after occupying Sudetenland, his moral record would perhaps be different.[38] If the American Revolution had been a bloody failure, Jefferson, Franklin and Washington would perhaps lack the credit that they hold in the annals of American political history. Had Nelson Mandela not been born into an apartheid system in South Africa, he would probably not be known as a hero. Thus, luck is a constitutive part of our daily lives and conduct. We confront the problem also in Hume's account of moral lives and our judgments of moral responsibility.

As we noted in chapter four, Hume believed that we have first-order dispositions that were not acquired voluntarily. He believed that a person is a higher level biological animal born into a family of social community. Some of her capacities are biologically inherited. Different people have various talents with which they were born, such as wit, good sense of humour, music talents, wisdom, and similar other mental abilities that Hume generally described as natural

virtues. Our human nature, as defined by our character, and our abilities also have a tendency to be influenced and shaped by the values of the social community into which we were born, especially family ties and contacts with people and other social institutions, such as friends and religions. As we shall see in chapter seven, sociability plays a fundamental role in Hume's moral thought. He conceived of a person as by nature a social creature. He was motivated by this idea to further conceive of moral values as social or "conventional" institutions that a person cannot possibly and sensibly avoid. These reflections support the view that a person, in Hume's moral thought, is not an individual who determines everything purely all by herself, independent of the values and other influential factors of the social space in which she lives and conducts her affairs. This view supports Russell's account that, in Hume's moral thought, what we are, in many ways, is usually influenced by complex social factors. This seems to impale morality on luck. If the values that provide standards for developing a virtuous moral life and character are dependent upon contingent social and other external institutions, such as political, religious, or cultural influences, they seem then to untenably hold moral agency hostage to luck. Thus, Russell is right that, in Hume's thought, some of our character traits, our moral circumstances, and the outcome of our moral performance, are involuntarily imposed on us; this supports the view that we are subject to luck in most of our lives.

The foregoing indicates that the problem of moral luck that Russell raises about Hume's view of moral agency and judgments of moral responsibility is an insightful challenge that introduces an interesting topic for discussion in Hume scholarship. The Humean context in which he discusses the problem is illuminating because the issue of moral luck is often discussed from a Kantian perspective.[39] I find Russell's account particularly interesting, given its emphasis on Hume's view of complex social factors that have a tendency, in various ways, to influence our character or the person that we turn out to be. Russell's interpretation of Hume's view of moral sentiment places emphasis on the idea that Hume believed that a moral character is causally determined (shaped) by configuration of complex social and other contingent influences, such as habituation by familial upbringing. This emphasis in a way distinguishes his account from Smith's view that places emphasis on Hume's view of the biological nature of our sentiments. That is, whereas in Smith's account, Hume conceived of moral sentiments as a biologically selected feature, in Russell's account, Hume believed that moral sentiments are predominantly shaped contingently by a cluster of human and social influences, such as habituation by rewards and punishments. My response to the standard interpretation of Hume's concept of moral sentiments will focus on the problem of constitutive luck that Russell raises about Hume's account of the relation between moral character and judgments of moral responsibility.

We have acknowledged the problem of luck in our ordinary moral lives. One thing however needs to be noted. To say that our moral lives and character are *open* to the influence of social and other environmental factors is one thing, but an independent account is required to show that those factors erode our ability to control how our character is manifested in action. That is, a convincing account is required to show that we have no power to control how environmental and biological factors operate and influence our choices and conduct. This is my response to the alleged problem of moral luck. Though luck and other involuntary contingencies are part of our daily moral practices, we normally have a way of dealing with them in our judgments of moral responsibility. As Barbara Herman put it, "if contingency is so much a part of the fabric of our ordinary action, it would be reasonable to think that everyday morality contains resources to manage it."[40] Though many of our moral and ordinary lives are subject to luck, I think constitutive luck is less problematic; the problem that it appears to pose to issues of moral agency and judgments of moral responsibility is not insuperable. I challenge the alleged problem of constitutive luck by rejecting the condition-of-control issue--the idea that we have no control over the character that we did not develop on our own.

The problem may be formulated as follows: Can we fairly assess the virtuousness or viciousness of a moral character by showing convincingly that its formation, consequences, and the circumstances in which it operates are all completely up to the determination of the moral agent? We shall see shortly that Hume rejected the libertarian affirmative answer to the question, nonetheless he believed that we generally have control over how involuntarily acquired character traits operate and the extent to which they shape who we are. As we shall see, character traits and moral circumstances over which we have no control are external constraints with which Hume believed we are normally sympathetic and we do usually take into account in our judgments of moral responsibility. In other words, for Hume, the actions that we condemn in our moral judgments are those that we think are caused by the desires and interests of the agent, and we often have a sympathy for the agent for those factors that we perceive as externally imposed on her. I argue that, though our moral judgments are often coarse rather than fine-grained, Hume believed that the moral acts that we normally condemn in our assessments of moral responsibility are those that were caused by moral character over which the agent had a control. Though we feel bad about their outcomes, we shall see Hume's belief that we are normally sympathetic with the character and moral circumstance over which a moral agent did not have control. I will defend the arguments in the context of Hume's "compatibilist" account of moral agency by appealing to his concept of "hypothetical liberty," liberty based on the principle of *could have done otherwise, if the agent had chosen.*

5.2.1. *MORAL AGENCY AND RESPONSIBILITY*

I think Russell's account underrates the space that Hume accorded second-order capacities. Second, I think the exact point of disagreement between Hume and libertarian view of moral agency is not given an adequate attention in Russell's account. My response will focus on the two statements.

Human agency is not *reduced* to the whims of luck, even if we accept the claim that what we are is fundamentally shaped by contingent social factors. Hume's compatibilist theory that conceives of moral agency as causally determined ascribes also to moral agents a strong power (control) over their wills, choices and practices. We judge people as responsible for the outcomes of their character based on our belief that, naturally, we all have potential capacities that need to be developed (cultivated) or trained by practice or habituation. We obtain control over our choices and the manifestations of our moral sentiments or character, depending on how we condition or habituate the mind through our practices. We judge mature (as compared to children) moral agents as responsible for the outcomes of their character because we believe that we are all masters of how our characters are manifested in action, that is, how they operate. As we noted in chapter four, Hume believed rightly that we were naturally endowed with potential capacities, such as the capacity for reflective evaluation, that need to be cultivated and properly conditioned through moral education or training. By so doing, we acquire abilities to be masters of our wills and desires and control them the way we choose. Therefore, it is not illegitimate, in Hume's account, to judge a person as morally responsible for the consequences of his or her moral character. In our judgments, we take into account the idea that a person has a potential ability to choose alternate courses of actions, unless he is under an external duress.

The alleged condition-of-control problem, according to which, in Hume's moral thought, we have no control over our moral characters, since they are causally determined by contingent factors independent of our will, does not take Hume's belief in compatibility between causal determinism and human agency sufficiently seriously. As we noted in chapter two, Hume was committed to a compatibilist account of free will and determinism, according to which it is not inconsistent to say that human nature, including its actions, is caused and yet free; free actions are caused. As Penelhum argues, in his compatibilist account, "Hume seeks to show that his human science can accommodate our freedom without exempting human choice from the regularity and predictability that he finds in our natures."[41] We recall that Hume's reconciling naturalistic project conceives human beings as part of the causal order of nature. Therefore, it makes sense to say that our character and actions are causally explainable by the laws of nature in much the same way

that the behavior of all other natural phenomena is causally explainable. Yet, as we recall, Hume believed that causal determinism does not entail the absence of free will. His compatibilist theory of moral agency recognizes it as a fact about our human nature that some of our traits and potentialities were not selected by our own choices. We are born as biological creatures, with some innate potential abilities, such as wisdom, good sense of humor, and similar other mental qualities. Also, the society into which we are born, especially our family and religion, has a strong tendency to influence and shape our character. Hume accepted all these as undeniable facts about human nature and the moral circumstance in which we conduct our moral lives. Nonetheless, he believed that social and other contingent influences do not erode our ability to choose what we want to be. Rather, habituation according to social values, as we shall see in chapter seven, empowers and increases our ability to make right moral choices. Though we are born into social environments that have a tendency to influence our character, Hume believed that mature moral agents have potential abilities to determine what they want to be, if those abilities are cultivated through training and practice. How well we perform in our moral acts largely depends on our choices, especially how we have habituated ourselves through our practices.

In defending his compatibilist theory, Hume described the autonomy involved in human agency as "hypothetical liberty" to underscore the idea that we have abilities to will what we want to be, *if we try or choose* through practice. In response to his own question of "what is meant by liberty, when applied to voluntary actions?" Hume argued: "By liberty, then, we can only mean *a power of acting or not acting, according to the determinations of the will*; that is, if we choose to remain at rest, we may; if we choose to move, we also may" (E. 95, Hume's emphasis). This conditional power to choose or not to choose, if we will, is a potential ability that we all naturally have. As Hume concluded: "Now, this hypothetical liberty is universally allowed to belong to every one who is not a prisoner and in chains;" this view, he saw as "no subject of dispute" (E 95). Normal human beings, except the prisoner, the mentally challenged, and those under physical coercion (e.g. one under a gun-point), have power over their choices. Hume's account is a positive definition of agent causation: a person has an ability or power to act and choose according to the determination of one's own will or desires. He believed that the character we judge, including the person's desires and the choice possibilities available to him, may be causally determined, especially by complex factors in the person's social environment. But this does not erode a normal mature moral agent's ability to choose a different character by his practices.[42] The conditional expression "could have done otherwise, *if*..." involved in Hume's conditional definition of liberty implies the claim that a person "would have done otherwise *if*...."[43] That is, the moral agent whom we judge as morally responsible is the person who had the capacity and

liberty (choice possibilities) to will to act or not to act differently, if he had chosen (or what amounts to the same thing, if he had tried, set out, decided, undertaken, or willed) to do so.[44] This way of conceiving moral agency is not necessarily a libertarian view. The libertarian does not believe in causal necessitation of moral character. But in Hume's compatibilist account of moral agency and responsibility, our desires, at least the first-order ones, are causally determined, especially by social values and parental upbringing.

As we noted in chapter two, Hume developed his compatibilist account to reject the libertarian view that it is inconsistent to conceive of free actions as causally determined. In Hume's account, free actions are those that are caused by the agent's will and desires, and this is distinguishable from externally constrained actions. Hume rejected the libertarian "negative" definition of free agency as consisting in the absence of causal determination. As we noted, causal determinism, in Hume's compatibilist account, must not be confused with constrained or forced actions. In the libertarian account, it sounds inconsistent to hold that the character that causally produced a person's actions was free and yet caused or determined.[45] On the libertarian view, if we accept causal determinism as true, then all talk about moral obligation and responsibility are absurd; the practices of punishing and blaming, the expressions of moral approval and condemnation, and generally, rewards and reprimands are all unjustifiable.[46] A more radically skeptical view of this is that the truth of causal determinism implies the idea that judgments of moral guilt, of blame, and of all talks about moral responsibility, are inherently confused or incoherent.[47] The libertarian argument may be summed up as follows: the notions of "*just* punishment and *moral* condemnation imply moral guilt, and guilt implies moral responsibility and moral responsibility implies freedom and freedom implies the falsity of determinism."[48] Hume had no problem accepting all the premises except that the notion of freedom entails "the falsity of causal determinism." Particularly, he rebutted the conclusion that libertarians deduce from the idea that moral character is causally determined.

Recall from chapter two the argument that free human agency, in Hume's criticism of the libertarian account, does not imply the absence of causal determination. As we noted, in Hume's compatibilist account, it is the *interference* with the exercise of one's choices, such as enslavement, kidnapping, raping, being held a hostage against one's will, and similar other forced acts, that takes away a person's choice abilities. In his compatibilist account of moral agency, to say that a person is responsible for an action amounts to no more than the claim that the person's actions are caused by his desires but not by some constraining factors, such as a gun at his head. We judge a person whose actions are externally constrained as free from moral guilt. Involuntary factors, such as deceptions, that cause a person to make erroneous judgments and choices,

according to Hume's argument, "draws no manner of guilt upon the person who is so unfortunate as to fall into them (T. 459). We are agents of what we are, for generally, "we are often in position to enact the choices we make, and also to enact the alternative choices that we do not make," as Penelhum states it in reference to Hume.[49] We judge a person as responsible for the consequences of her character because we believe she is the master of her character. In passing judgments, we ask whether in the moral circumstance, the person could have done otherwise. As Hume's definition of hypothetical liberty indicates, a person is an agent of an action if in the moral circumstance that she faces, she could have done otherwise.

Hume's concept of hypothetical (conditional) liberty sets a rigorous standard for our assessments of moral responsibility. We must judge a person as morally responsible for an act only if we can show that his acts were caused by a character over which he had control. Morally responsible acts are those that are caused in a circumstance in which the agent had the ability and the choice to act otherwise. In the absence of this condition, in Hume's compatibilist account, the action is a forced or constrained one that cannot be imputed against the agent. One of his basic emphases in his theory of human agency was the view that we must judge a person as morally culpable by proving against him that his action was premeditated. He urged issues of moral responsibility to be assessed in terms of the premeditated mental states of moral agents. He maintained: "The only proper object of hatred or vengeance is a person or creature, endowed with thought and consciousness; and when any criminal or injurious actions excite that passion, it is only by their relation to the person, or connexion with him" (E. 98; T. 411). The idea that moral responsibility must be assessed in terms of the premeditated mental states of moral agents was Hume's committed position in his discussions of "agent causation" in his theory "Of Liberty and Necessity" both in the *Treatise* and the *Enquiry*. Consider his argument. "Men are not blam'd for such evil actions as they perform *ignorantly* and casually, whatever may be their consequences...Men are less blam'd for such evil actions, as they perform *hastily and unpremeditatedly, than such as proceed from thought and deliberation"* (T. 412, my emphasis). A moral agent's temper, motives, and the moral circumstance are all important factors that Hume urged us to consider when determining the moral culpability of a person. When responding to examine the "long disputed question concerning *liberty and necessity,"* which "occurs so naturally in treating the will" (T. 399), Hume attempted to "prove from experience that, our actions have a constant union with our motives, tempers, and circumstances" (T. 401).

5.2.2. *MORAL CONTINGENCIES*

Now, given Hume's acknowledgment of the fact that some selected character traits, such as prudence, were naturally given independent of our own effort, it must be admitted that some people may do better in their moral performance than others. Particularly, those endowed with certain natural talents (virtues) may be in a stronger position to perform better in their moral duties and the pursuit of virtuous lives than those who were not gifted with similar talents. Also, some people may be lucky to be trained by parents who are "morally better" than others. For example, one may be unlucky to be brought up by parents who have terrible moral values, such as gender and racial discrimination; another may be brought up by criminal parents, such as armed-robbers. Yet, a different child may be lucky to be brought up by parents with good moral values. Another child may be unlucky to be born into an alcoholic family. How do we deal with contingent cases like these in our judgments of moral responsibility? Hume provides us with a suggestion. He believed that we are sensible beings who normally have sympathy for victims of contingent circumstances. He appealed to our sympathetic responses as a key for dealing with contingent cases that challenge and appears to undermine our judgments of moral responsibility.

Judgments of moral responsibility are, in Hume's moral thought, about who a person is (as defined by his character). But in the judgment, we require facts about the person, typically facts about his mental dispositions and the causal backgrounds and circumstances in which the agent acted. We ask many questions, such as could the person have done otherwise? We assume that a person is responsible if, in the circumstance and the outcome of his action, the individual acted freely according to his or her own will. By this, whether the person was brought up by a virtuous or a vicious parent, we assume that how one chooses to act is entirely up to the individual but not determined by her fate or parents. We assume this because we believe that a person's character is not fixed eternally (once-and-for-all) by the ways she was brought up. A person, *qua person*, when she comes of age (reaches an adult age) has the ability to decide (we assume in our judgments) who she wants to be--to follow his parents' ways of life or to reform his character through his practices. Of course, the effort to choose and reform his character is not always easy; he may fail, it may also not be attained overnight. It may even subject some people to chronic anxiety and other psychological difficulties. But in Hume's thought, a successful moral performance is not the basic criterion for determining moral responsibility. We are normally sympathetic, given our knowledge of their causal circumstances, with the unlucky agents whose characters are determined by certain unfortunate factors, such as alcoholic parents. This is why we have various social and psychological institutions to help some people to reform their character to live a normal moral life in society.

In our judgments, we are also sympathetic, and we relax our judgments of moral responsibility, towards some people who fail through no fault of their own in the effort to reform their moral character. We tend to relax our moral judgments and rather sympathize with the unfortunate ones whose characters are caused by terrible factors that erode their ability to overcome the outcome of those characters, when we are well informed of the accurate facts about their situation. We may not feel good about the causal outcomes of the character of the person, but we often relax (or suspend) our reprimands, when we learn of the unfortunate circumstance of the agent. We have similar attitudes toward those who fail to pass the test of moral performance, when we are aware of the fact that their characters were causally constrained by certain inexplicable or unfortunate factors beyond their control. That is, Hume did not fail to recognize the sympathetic attitudes that we normally express towards victims who fail the test of moral demands, due to the influence of external constraints on their character. Consider one of his arguments:

> When we require any action, or blame a person for not performing it, we always suppose, that one in that situation shou'd be influenced by the proper motive of that action, and we esteem it vicious in him to be regardless of it. *If we find, upon enquiry, that the virtuous motive was still powerful over his breast, tho' check'd in its operation by some circumstances unknown to us, we retract our blame, and have the same esteem for him, as if he had actually perform'd the action, which we require of him.* (T. 478, my emphasis).

Hume believed that many of our qualities are, in one way or the other, gifts we owe to the fortunes of nature.[50] But the alleged condition-of-control problem that is raised against his account is misleading. Though he believed that some of our character traits are acquired by the fortunes of nature, it was Hume's considered view that moral agents are masters of their talents, at least in terms of their *use* and *application*. He considered good fortunes as gifts of nature with which we are endowed to use to benefit society and ourselves. Those who fail to cultivate and use their natural talents are reprimanded. In the *Enquiry,* he urged us to draw a distinction between fortunes and the moral sentiments or character that we assess, when determining moral agency and responsibility. He wrote: "the tendencies of actions and characters, not their real accidental consequences, are alone regarded in our moral determinations or general judgements" (E. 228n). The determination of our character and actions that it causally produces may be open to luck, but we are masters of their tendencies and the particular modes of their operations. We identify the natural traits or talents that we acquire by fortune, and cultivate and apply them ourselves. As Hume put it: "'Tis necessary…to know our rank and station in the world, whether it be fix'd by

our birth, fortune, employments, talents or reputation. 'Tis necessary to feel the same sentiment and passion of pride in conformity to it, and to regulate our actions accordingly" (T. 599).

It cannot be denied that, by fortune, some people happen to have certain character traits (such as patriotism) that are naturally virtuous in terms of their usefulness to society. But some people also endeavor to contribute to society by effort, good intentions, or benevolence. Yet, in our assessments, we evaluate the two by the same standard because we separate factors of fortune from the tendencies of the character, since we assume that the specific *application* of the character is entirely up to the agent.[51] Certainly, the former has a better chance of success than the other, but, as I argued, we have sympathy for moral failures that are beyond our abilities, when we see that the agent made an effort from a virtuous motive. In our assessments, we separate fortunes from moral achievements because we believe that talents have to be cultivated and applied. In our judgments, it does not require of a great effort (since we can do this, if we practice) to be able to separate moral characters from the luck of fortunes. As Hume argued:

> Though in our real feeling or sentiment, we cannot help paying greater regard to one whose station, joined to virtue, renders him really useful to society, than to one, who exerts the social virtues only in good intentions and benevolent affections. *Separating the character from the fortune, by an easy and necessary effort of thought, we pronounce these persons alike, and give them the same general praise.* The judgment corrects or endeavours to correct the appearance (E. 228n, emphasis added).

Hume's argument that we separate fortunes of luck from the character that we assess in our moral judgements suggests the view that our admiration for the quality of natural character traits does not *sometimes* match the moral judgments that we pass about them. The admiration that we express towards a given character trait (such as courage) is one thing, but our approval or condemnation of its application may sometimes be different. This suggestion is supported by Hume's argument in the *Treatise*:

> 'Tis true, when …a good disposition is attended with good fortune, which renders it really beneficial to society, it gives a stronger pleasure to the spectator, and is attended with a more lively sympathy. We are more affected by it; and *yet we do not say that it is more virtuous, or that we esteem it more*. We know, that an alteration of fortune may render the benevolent disposition entirely impotent; and *therefore we separate, as much as possible, the fortune from the disposition* (T. 585, my emphasis).

For example, Saddam Hussein may be admired for his courage and ability to withstand the joint forces of the United States and the allied countries in the effort, arguably, to disempower him (and to see him overthrown). Yet we may not accept him as a virtuous person, given his alleged cruel treatments of his own people and his effort to overtake Kuwait. A given natural talent, such as courage or heroism, which we admire, may nevertheless attract our condemnation or approval,

depending on its tendency to be beneficial or harmful in terms of its application. As Hume illustrated it:

> an excessive courage and magnanimity, especially when it displays itself under the frowns of fortune, contributes, in a great measure, to the character of a hero, and will render a person the admiration of posterity; at the same time, that it ruins his affairs, and leads him into dangers and difficulties, with which otherwise he would never have been acquainted (T. 600).

We are responsible for any trait that we possess because we direct and control how it operates. A natural character trait is a gift we inherit from birth, and like any other gifts, it may become an asset only when an effort is made to invest or put it into an appropriate use. For example, a gift of a certain monetary value is useless unless the recipient cashes the check. A natural trait may also become a liability to society and to the person who possesses it, when it is not properly used or invested. In all these, we carry the responsibility for how we relate to and apply our natural traits. Subsequently, we are morally responsible for their outcomes.

5.2.3. *LACK OF PARENTAL AFFECTION*

A critic may argue that Hume was not consistent with his idea that, in our judgements, we separate fate from our assessments of moral responsibility. His argument seems to be challenged by a comment that he expressed about our condemnation of the father who fails his parental duty, due to lack of natural affection for his child. Hume considered parental love as a natural duty, hence he claimed that those who lack affectionate sentiments for their children attract our moral condemnation.

> We blame a father for neglecting his child. Why? because it shews a want of natural affection, which is the duty of every parent. Were not natural affection a duty, the care of children cou'd not be a duty; and 'twere impossible we cou'd have the duty in our eye in the attention we give to our offspring (T. 478).

The specific lack of parental affection that Hume discussed in the passage seems to refer to the natural gift of love and care for one's child. His reference to the father who lacks the caring sentiment for his child applies to the parent who feels he was not gifted by nature to have it. The passage seems to support the idea that Hume, indeed, saw some of our virtues or character traits as subject to luck. It seems also to support the view that some of our ordinary judgments are not only unfair, but also odd. How can we make sense of the idea that a father is morally guilty of the gift of love for his child that he happens to lack by the misfortune of nature? But since we (the judges) are also naturally endowed with natural love and sympathy for children, it may also be asked: how can we resist reprimanding the father who has no care for his child? The issue raises a deep puzzle about moral judgments. In my own view, the idea of lack of an affectionate sentiment

for one's own child seems to be more of an excuse than a misfortune of nature. I think Hume seems to hold a similar position on the matter.

Hume's position on the issue may be deeply understood by closely examining what he meant exactly by the notion of "natural affection," the sentiment that the alleged father lacks. The problem may be rejected as caused by a misfortune of nature. On closer observation, it is not directly (explicitly) clear that Hume construed the virtue of affectionate sentiment that the alleged father lacks for his child as an ability that he was denied from birth. Our condemnation seems to be grounded in our belief that normal (that is, with the exception of those who are not capable because of psychological or physical incapacitation) human beings are generally expected to have affectionate sentiments for their children. That is, we assume that an affectionate sentiment for one's child is a virtue that human beings commonly or generally have. From our experience of normal human practices, we believe that it is natural for a father to love his child. The foregoing interpretation of the concept of "natural" to imply a common or general practice among normal human beings is consistent with a clarification that Hume made about his references to the notion of "natural" when concluding Part I of the third book of the *Treatise*. In clarifying the specific senses in which he conceived of some virtues as "natural," Hume contrasted the term "natural" with (a) something miraculous or extraordinary, (b) something that is artificially created by humans, and (c) something rare, unusual or not common (T. 474-75).

Among the three, Hume considered (c) as the appropriate contrast to the term "natural," at least as he used it. A virtue is natural in this sense when it is not unusual among human practices, that is, when from our observation of human nature, we see it as a common practice. Moral sentiments are potential psychological dispositions that human beings generally and universally share in common.[52] According to Hume's argument:

> But *nature* may also be opposed to rare and unusual; and this sense of the word, which is the common one, there may often arise disputes concerning what is natural and unnatural.... Frequent and rare depend upon the number of examples we have observ'd; as this number may gradually encrease or diminish, 'twill be impossible to fix any exact boundaries betwixt them. We may only affirm on this head, that if ever there was any thing, which cou'd be called natural in this sense, the sentiments of morality certainly may (T. 474).

Hume explained that what he specifically meant by the view that the "sentiments of morality" is natural is the idea that no human person in any nation can be said as lacking moral sentiments. Continuing the argument, he explained: "there never was any nation of the world, nor any single person in any nation, who was utterly depriv'd of them, and who never, in any instance, shw'd the least approbation or dislike of manners" (T. 474). In Hume's moral thought, our human nature is constituted such that only the mentally challenged may be said as lacking moral sentiments.

Hume made this clear in the conclusion of the argument: "These sentiments are so rooted in our constitution and temper, that without entirely confounding the human mind by disease or madness, 'tis impossible to extirpate and destroy them" (*ibid.*). Hume defended in the argument the idea that the virtue of moral sentiments is a natural disposition that every human being possesses; nobody was deprived of this disposition. This supports my suggestion that, by lack of the sentiment of "natural affection" for the child, Hume meant something more than the view that the father's problem is a misfortune of nature. The problem seems to be a failure on the part of the father to cultivate and express the sentiment of love for his child, for an unknown reason. Even if the father feels in his heart as lacking it, he can develop and express the sentiment, if he tried through practice and habituation, since a moral sentiment is a potential disposition that is accessible to all sentient human animals. Hume actually suggested this idea in his discussion of the father's problem.

> When any virtuous motive or principle is common in human nature, a person, who feels in his heart devoid of that principle, may hate himself upon that account, and may perform the action without the motive, from certain sense of duty, in order to acquire by practice, that virtuous principle, or at least, to disguise to himself, as much as possible, his want of it. A man that really feels no gratitude in his temper, is still pleas'd to perform grateful actions, and think he has, by that means, fulfilled his duty (T. 479).

Whatever caused him to feel that he lacks the sentiment of affection for his child, the father has to see it as his duty to care for the child, and must make the effort. The father could reverse his situation, if he wills and practices (makes the effort) to do so. But if he fails to *make* the effort, he may legitimately be condemned as an irresponsible parent. This is the basic principle of moral agency by which we reprimand the person that fails his or her parental duty.

5.3. *THE ALLEGED INALTERABILITY OF NATURAL SENTIMENTS*

Chapter four defended a Humean argument that we have abilities to control our natural propensities and determine what we want to be, depending on how we condition or habituate our potential capacities through our practices. I have relied on the argument to defend Hume in the foregoing discussion as believing that our judgment of moral responsibility is grounded in our conviction that moral agents have control over how their moral sentiments or character operates. The argument rejects the attribution to Hume the idea that we cannot "correct" our natural sentiments, since they are original existents. I conclude the discussion by clarifying what Hume meant by some of his references to the idea that some passions are "unalterable" original existents.

I find misleading the indictment of Hume for not allowing any "correction" of the operations of our natural (original) sentiments. As we saw in chapter three, Hampton defends the argument in many of her writings. For example, in her criticism of Hume, Hampton is influenced by the standard view that, in Hume, we do not correct the manifestations of our original passions or sentiments, given their basic nature. In her paper, "The Hobbesian Side of Hume," Hampton rates Hume's moral theory as less plausible than that of Hobbes'. She denies the view that, in Hume, we correct our first-order passions. She thinks that, in moral reasoning Hume allowed *correction of judgments* but not *correction of natural sentiments or feelings*. By this, she subscribes to the standard interpretation initiated by Smith, according to which, in Hume's view, since sentiments have original existents, they cannot be changed or developed by any means. The argument is often bolstered by Hume's remark in the following passage from the *Treatise*:

> In general, all sentiments of blame or praise are variable, according to our situation of nearness or remoteness, with regard to the person blam'd or prais'd, and according to the present disposition of our mind. But these variations we regard not in our general decisions, but still apply the terms expressive of our liking or dislike, in the same manner, as if we remain'd in one point of view. Experience soon teaches us this method of correcting our sentiments, or at least, of correcting our language, where the sentiments are more stubborn and inalterable (T. 582).

Referring to the passage, Hampton argues:

> it is not exactly clear from this passage whether we are correcting what we naturally *feel*, or only what we judge about what we feel. However, he [i.e. Hume] goes on to suggest it is the latter when he says, `Experience soon teaches us this method of correcting our sentiments, or at least, of correcting our language, where the sentiments are stubborn and unstable'.[53]

It is not clear what critics exactly mean when they attribute to Hume the view that we cannot "correct" our sentiments. Three possible interpretations may be implied: (1) that we have no control over how the passions originally arise in us, (2) we cannot recreate ourselves anew by reconstructing or restructuring the passions, since they are constitutive parts of our biological human nature, and (3) we have no control over the manifestations or operations of the passions. Interpretation (1) is consistent with Hume's distinction between original impressions and secondary impressions in terms of their causal origin. I will shortly accept (2) as also a plausible interpretation. But generally, critics imply (3), and this is what I find worrisome. As we saw in chapter three, the idea that we cannot correct the manifestations of our natural sentiments forms part of the standard objection that Hume believed that we cannot rationally criticize or evaluate our desires. Concerning the control of the passions, "Hume's own view," Michael Smith writes, "is that whereas our beliefs can be rational or irrational, our desires, which cannot be assessed in

these terms at all, are beyond rational criticism altogether."[54] We saw a similar argument from Hampton. Her declaration in the above passage the view that Hume believed that we can only correct our judgments but not our natural feelings supports her general position that, in Hume's moral thought, we cannot rationally evaluate or criticize the manifestations of our desires.

Hampton's objection does not adequately capture Hume's argument. Pall Ardal is right that in the passage "Hume talks about correcting our sentiments and seems to attribute the demand for this correction to reasons," the disposition of the mind that Hume identified as nothing but reflective calm passions.[55] Hampton's objection flies directly in the face of some of Hume's own arguments. Consider one of Hume's arguments that maintains that to pass impartial moral judgements, "it is requisite to employ much reasoning, in order to feel the proper sentiment; and *a false relish may frequently be corrected by argument and reflection*" (E. 173, emphasis added). Hume's argument that we correct the impressions of "false relish" through "reflection" echoes his claim that we develop impressions of the second order (or what he called "secondary impressions") when we think about the causal effects of our immediate or original impressions. In the passage that Hampton cites to support her argument, Hume was arguing for the view that an objective moral evaluation requires of us to correct our biased sentiments to adopt general point of view. As Ardal explains:

> Notice that in this passage Hume talks about correcting our sentiments. Thus the valuation, when corrected, would still be a sentiment. It is quite reasonable to see this as the distinction between the biased valuations of our ordinary passions and the objective valuations of proper approval or disapproval -- the indirect passions -- when they arise from considering qualities of mind or character from an objective point of view.[56]

In the passage, Hume was talking about two things: (a) the method of correcting our sentiments, and (b) the method of correcting our language. The second (b) may involve *correction of our judgments*. But contrary to Hampton's conclusion, in identifying the two, Hume did not deny (a) in favour of (b). In fact, what he rather said in the passage was the view that *correction of our sentiments* is the principal method by which we resolve moral disagreements to "fix on some *steady* and *general* point of view." In his argument, *correction of judgments* is required only "where the sentiments are stubborn and unstable." As we noted in chapter four, on Hume's view, even when we correct our mistaken judgments, we invariably correct our sentiments. For, he believed that, on many occasions, the particular ways that we feel are caused by objects of our perceptive judgments. Thus, the view that, in moral deliberations, Hume did not allow correction on the original motivations of our sentiments is certainly false.

The idea that in Hume's moral thought our sentiments cannot be corrected confuses his consideration of character as durable and stable psychological dispositions for the view that

character is immutable; the notion of durability is assumed as implying the idea of immutability. Hume, indeed, believed that our moral character is defined by the durable state of our moral sentiments.[57] He frequently described character as durable mental states to emphasize the idea that only actions that truly reflect or represent who a person is ought to be considered when assessing the moral culpability of a person.[58] He compared the durability of a moral character with the temporal nature of actions. He conceived actions as "produced and annihilated in a second" (T. 349); usually they are "by their very nature temporary and perishing" (T. 411; E. 98). By contrast, Hume described mental qualities or character traits as "remaining after the action is performed (T. 349). A moral character describes an enduring psychological disposition of a person.[59] Durable character traits, such as intelligence, generosity and the like, are mental qualities that causally determine actions. The regular pattern of life and behavior of a person is explainable by the character of the person. Given the regularity of the manifestations of our character, Hume believed that, "a spectator can commonly infer our actions from our motives and our character" (T. 408).

By conceiving them as durable mental qualities, Hume did not imply the view that character traits are not changeable. Russell acknowledges this view. According to his argument, though Hume conceived character traits as durable mental qualities that we do not develop on our own, in his moral thought, "it is to be expected that a person's character will change through time."[60] Russell concludes: "a person's character traits, Hume observes, are neither fixed nor unalterable."[61] Jane McIntyre argues in a similar way that Hume believed that "characters are durable but not immutable."[62] McIntyre supports the argument by referring us to a view in Hume's discussion of personal identity in which he maintained that "the same person may vary his character and disposition, as well as his impressions and ideas, without losing his identity (T. 261). Hume emphasized in many places in the *Treatise* and in the *Enquiry* the view that, through repentance, a person can change (reform) his character by altering (redirecting) the passions upon which the character is founded. In reference to the particular modes of a person's character, consider one of Hume's arguments: "We never think of him without reflecting on these qualities; unless repentance and change of life have produc'd an alteration in that respect. In which case the passion is likewise alter'd" (T. 349; see also T. 412; E. 99). In Hume's view, a criminal is punished to correct and help him change his sentiments, for example, by providing him with a psychological help of how to control his anger and other violent impulses.

Now, the following clarification must be highlighted about my arguments. I have defended Hume for believing that moral agents have abilities to control the manifestations of their sentiments, when cultivated and habituated (conditioned) through learning and practice. But I do

not attribute to him the idea that in correcting the operations of the passions, we *recreate* new passions. The controversy is grounded in Hume's concept of "natural abilities."[63] Therefore, the concept needs to be examined more closely. I have not denied Hume's belief that some of our abilities are innate. His particular examples include intellectual virtues such as natural talents like wit, prudence, intelligence, and good sense of humor. Rather, my argument is that natural abilities are, in Hume's account, *potential* dispositions that need to be developed or cultivated through practice.[64] In Hume's thought, we assess the value of a moral quality in terms of its usefulness. In his view, "the utility and advantage of any quality to ourselves is a source of virtue, as well as its agreeable to others" (T. 596). He consistently believed that our natural traits are useful only when they are recognized and cultivated. Our educational, training, and other skill development schemes and institutions are set up largely to help us develop and actualize our potential abilities. In Hume's virtue ethics, a morally mature person is the individual who trains and habituates herself to be a master of the manifestations of her human nature.

Hume's remarks concerning the view that some character traits, such as natural talents, good sense of humor and wit, are innate abilities was an acknowledgment of the fact that these virtues cannot be *recreated anew*, since they are natural dispositions we inherit from birth. Rather, his argument was that, by educating and training the mind, we *redirect* and *develop* (actualize) our potential abilities. He argued in one place: "Men are not able radically to cure, either in themselves or others, that narrowness of soul, which makes them prefer the present to the remote. They cannot change their natures. All they can do is to *change their situation*" (T. 537; my emphasis). Hume claimed in the passage the view that we change the influence and the operations of our mental dispositions by redirecting their manifestations. He emphasized the idea in his theory of personal identity. "As the same individual republic may not only change its members, but also its laws and constitutions; in like manner the same person may *vary his character* and disposition, as well as his impressions and ideas, without losing his identity" (T. 261, emphasis added).[65] We develop our innate traits to utilize their usefulness. Hume emphasized in many places of his *Treatise* the idea that, though we cannot possibly recreate them anew, our natural traits need to be recognized and cultivated for their usefulness. For example, he emphasized the idea in his discussion of "the greatness of mind" such as those he called "heroic virtues" like "courage, intrepidity, ambition, love of glory, magnanimity and all the other shining virtues of that kind" (T. 599-600). He maintained in one of his arguments: "Whatever capacity any one may be endow'd with, 'tis entirely useless to him, if he be not acquainted with it, and form not designs suitable to it" (T. 597). Insisting on the idea, Hume reformulated the argument in the following way. "'Tis necessary, therefore, to know our rank and station in the world, whether it be fix'd by

our birth, fortune, employments, talents, or reputation. 'Tis necessary to feel the sentiment and passion of pride in conformity to it, and to regulate our actions accordingly" (T. 599). Hume's argument supports the view that we need to discover our originally given abilities and talents, develop and apply them as guides or standards to program our lives, decisions, and actions.

We need to note that an originally given ability or trait is one thing, and developing and reshaping it to suit our desires, to conform to social standards and values, and to fulfill other cherished interests, is another. Hume developed the argument against philosophers, such as Bernard Mandeville,[66] who tried to reduce *all* virtues to human artifacts, especially, to the instructions of politicians.[67] Against this view, Hume argued that "'twou'd be in vain, either for moralists or politicians, to tamper with us, or attempt to change the usual course of our actions, with a view to public interests, were we not originally disposed to them" (T. 521). Hume meant the idea that, in educating us to correct the limitations and defects of our original human nature, such as our natural selfishness, politicians cannot ask us to recreate our human nature anew. Only the original creator can do this. Continuing the preceding passage, Hume clarified his point:

> And indeed, did the success of their[68] designs depend upon their success in correcting the selfishness and ingratitude of men, they wou'd never make any progress, unless aided by omnipotence, which is alone to new mould the human mind, and change its character in such fundamental articles (T. 521).

Instead, what we do when we correct the defects of our original human nature is an effort to redirect its manifestations. This is the conclusion of Hume's argument, according to which politicians cannot instruct us to mold anew our naturally given human character traits. Concluding the preceding passage, notice Hume's emphasis: "All they [i.e., politicians and moralists] can pretend to is to give a new direction to those natural passions, and teach us that we can better satisfy our appetites in an oblique and artificial manner, than by their headlong and impetuous motion" (*ibid*). This is what I emphasized in chapter four. When we develop our potential abilities, habituate and calm down the "headlong and impetuous motion" of our primitive (original) sentiments that are often and easily animated by the passions of selfishness and momentary pleasures, we steer them towards a moral direction. As we noted, we do this through learning and practice.

To sum up, the discussion has generally shown Hume's belief that we judge people as responsible for their action by assuming that they have an ability to act otherwise. We have also noted Hume's conviction that the character we judge when we assess the moral culpability of a person is the sentiment over which we believe the person has a control. We acknowledged that contingent factors, such as social values and family upbringing, have a tendency to shape our character or who we are. But I have called to attention Hume's view of how we deal with such

factors in our judgments of moral responsibility. We judge people as responsible for their actions based on our conviction that human beings have potential capacities to control their natural propensities and other contingent factors to determine what they want to be, if they try or practice. We have noted also from Hume the sympathy that we normally express towards those who *fail* in the effort. We are also sympathetic to the unfortunate ones, such as those who happen to be born into uncontrollable circumstances, such as alcoholic families and other abusive social circumstances that restrict a person's choice possibilities or erode her ability to choose otherwise. These ways of dealing with moral contingencies indicate that, we take luck and misfortunes into account when determining the moral culpability of a person. Though we face luck and other contingent challenges in our daily lives, we have noted from Hume that we have a way of dealing with the problem in our judgments of moral responsibility. Though our judgments are not perfect, we are sensible beings who normally relax and sympathize with victims of unfortunate moral circumstances who have no control of how their character is shaped.

Chapter 6

HUME'S SUBJECTIVE NATURALISM

INTRODUCTION

Chapter one argued that Hume's naturalistic moral theory conceives moral theory as a causal explanatory account of moral behaviour. The theory maintains that we formulate moral judgements and general principles of morality by supporting them with "facts" that we induce about human nature. As we noted, the theory rejects any moral system that is not founded in facts about human nature. Defending the theory, Hume recommended that "in all moral disquisitions" we must "reject every system of ethics, however subtle or ingenuous, which is not founded on *fact and observation"* about human nature. (E. 175, emphasis added). From this passage and similar other references, I concluded that, in defending continuity between morality and the empirical sciences (such as psychology), Hume in his naturalistic moral theory conceived moral issues as empirical factual matters. Moral questions are factual problems answerable by inducing facts about human nature to support our judgements, especially facts about the mental states and dispositions that explain the character and intentions of moral agents. One may be puzzled by the claim that Hume construed moral inquiries as an issue about factual matters, given the standing controversy surrounding his remarks regarding fact-value inferential relationship.

The debate about Hume's fact-value remarks is very old, and volumes of literature already exist on the issue, but his remarks continuous to overwhelm us. As W. D. Falk (1995) beautifully puts it in his "Hume on Is and Ought": "Unlike old soldiers, the rhetoric of the great neither dies nor fades away. And so Hume's celebrated 'is-ought' passage still provokes debate."[1] I cannot avoid adding to the debate, given the fundamental nature of the issue to my interpretation of Hume's naturalism. However, the context of my response differs. The uniqueness of my contribution is characterized by the fact that I see the problem as a debate between realism and antirealism on the concept of "moral facts". My argument is that Hume's position on the place of facts in moral reasoning is controversial but it is misleading to take him as rejecting the relevance of "moral facts" to moral judgments and decisions. How we interpret Hume's remarks depends on our understanding

of the concept of "moral facts." I call to attention the view that what appears as Hume's ambiguity in his remarks about the place of facts in moral decisions and judgments, when closely examined, actually involved a rejection of moral realists' concept of moral facts. On the realists' view that Hume rejected, naturalistic objective truths pick out (represent or correspond to) moral facts that exist out there in nature independent of any mental states. Hume rejected moral realists' conception of moral facts as mind-independent objective truths that exist out there in nature waiting to be discovered by reasoning. In place of the view of "rationalistic realists" (RR), as I will call it, Hume conceived of moral facts as mind-dependent (or psychological) truths that exist out there by human projection. I will identify as "subjective naturalism" (SN) Hume's naturalistic argument that grounds morality in psychological moral facts.

6.1. HUME'S AMBIGUITY ABOUT THE PLACE OF FACTS IN MORALITY

At first glance, Hume was ambiguous about the relevance of facts to moral judgments and the formulation of moral principles. W. D. Hudson, for example, thinks Hume was inconsistent in his remarks.[2] As we saw in chapter one, Hume's naturalism rejects any moral theory that is not founded in facts about human nature. He wrote: "in all moral disquisitions" we must "reject every system of ethics, however subtle or ingenuous, which is not founded on *fact and observation*" about human nature. (E. 175, emphasis added). But we are also most familiar with Hume's remarks in two continuous paragraphs in the *Treatise* (468-69) concerning "fact-value" and "is-ought" inferential relations.[3] In the remarks, Hume seemed to argue strenuously that moral issues are not factual or empirical matters. The "matter-of-fact" passage opens with the claim that "morality consists not in any relations, that are the objects of science...[and thus] it consists not in any *matter of fact*."[4] Illustrating the argument, Hume argued that a judgement regarding the viciousness of a wilful murder, for example, is not a statement of fact. In support of his fact-value remarks, we are also familiar with Hume's argument that moral judgments are neither of the kind of non-empirical reasoning about relations of ideas, such as mathematical deductions, nor of the kind of empirical reasoning about factual matters, such as judgments regarding cause and effect relations (T. 458).

Hume's two positions on the issue appear to be contradictory. How could he seriously and consistently recommend moral philosophers to "reject every system of ethics, however subtle or ingenuous, which is not founded on *fact and observation,*" and believe at the same time that "morality consists not in any relations, that are the object of science; but if examin'd will prove with equal certainty, that it consists not in any *matter of fact*"?[5] Overwhelming attempts to make sense of Hume's fact-value remarks discuss the problem only in the context of the first horn of the controversy in which Hume declared that moral inquiries are not issues about matters of fact.[6]

That is, the problem is often examined without taking seriously Hume's call on moral philosophers to reject every system of ethics, however subtle and ingenuous, that is not founded in facts and observation. In orthodox account, Hume defended the view that moral problems are not factual issues resolvable by appealing to descriptive facts in the world: facts about human experience. According to one strand of this view, Hume saw an incommensurable gulf between science and ethics, given the descriptive or factual character of the former, as contrasted with the normative character of the latter. The interpretation assumes that Hume saw scientific enquiries to be purely value-free descriptive investigations about factual matters. By contrast, it is believed that Hume saw moral inquiries as purely a normative enterprise whose business involves passing value judgments and supplying normative reasons for actions.[7]

Another strand of orthodox account holds that Hume's fact-value remarks anticipated the disjunctive division that the classical or early emotivists (such as A. J. Ayer) conceived between scientific statements and moral judgments. In passing into law, so to speak, the view that no value judgments can be premised on factual accounts, Hume's fact-value remarks, on orthodox reading, is a precursor of the "non-cognitivism" of the classical emotivists.[8] On Anthony Flew's view, Hume really meant that moral statements, rather than being about attitudes, serve to express them. The real Hume was the ancestor of noncognitivism and the 'is-ought' passage its early charter."[9] As another philosopher also argues in reference to Hume's fact-value passage, "[t]his passage is often summed up in the slogan 'no-'ought'-from-'is' and defined as 'Hume's Law.' It is alleged to do wonders--to point up a fundamental distinction between facts and values, to prove non-cognitivism and (above all) to refute naturalism."[10] David Brink also writes that the "is/ought thesis is ...used to argue that moral claims cannot be fact-stating and that, as a result, noncognitivism is true."[11] The claim that Hume and the non-cognitive emotivists refuted naturalism implies the idea that they both saw a disjunctive gap between scientific and moral statements. I begin my response to what appears as Hume's contradiction on his dual remarks about the relation between facts and values by first rejecting the alleged alliance between Hume and the classical emotivists on their noncognitivist's claim that moral assertions are distinguishable from factual statements.

6.2. HUME AND EMOTIVISM

A detailed discussion of the relation between Hume's moral theory and the moral systems of the classical or early twentieth-century emotivists is crucially important. For, my argument in chapter one that Hume measured the acceptability of a scientific statement according to its empirical or factual content seems to make Hume a precursor of the scientific system of the early logical

positivists. But if true, then Hume may also be construed as anticipating the positivistic emotivists' denial that moral claims are fact-stating. This in turn will cast doubt on the argument in chapter one that Hume's naturalistic defense of continuity between morality and the empirical sciences construed moral problems as factual problems. To alleviate any doubt, a distinction between the philosophical systems of Hume and the logical empiricists needs to be strongly defended. My task must not be construed as a denial of a possible connection between the two philosophical systems. The emotivists, in fact, took their point of departure from Hume's empiricism. My concern is that the connection has to be made with caution. I want to show that, despite appearance of some similarities, there is a fundamental difference between the two moral systems. The disparity that I want to highlight between the two particularly applies to different empirical systems in which their moral theories are grounded. Emotivism encompasses a broad spectrum of ethical theories. My examination of the relation between Hume's moral theory and the emotivists' relies on the picture of emotivism that we learn from A. J. Ayer.[12]

To begin with, it must be acknowledged that there is a similarity between the philosophical systems of Hume and the classical emotivists. Certain features of their philosophical arguments make them appear to share common philosophical commitments. One apparent similarity between them consists in the empirical foundation in which their philosophical systems are grounded. Even on their empiricism, a distinction can be noted. As we shall see as the discussion unfolds, the emotivists were logical empiricists and rejected the psychological empiricism to which Hume was committed in his moral thought. However, given their common empiricist background, it can be generally maintained that Hume and the emotivists belonged to a common philosophical family. Both were "empirical naturalists," inasmuch as they located morality in human conditions rather than in a transcendent source.[13] Hume and the emotivists, in common ally, distanced their naturalistic moral worlds from Platonic ideal world of Forms where true justice is ideally realizable, and Moorean intuitionist world where, epistemically, non-natural moral facts and the intrinsic goodness of moral values are intuitively discernible.

The second similarity is about their common denial of realists' idea that moral assertions are made to pick out mind-independent objective facts that exist out there in the world waiting to be discovered by reasoning. The emotivists distinguished between analytic and synthetic truths, as Hume distinguished between truths obtained from "relations of ideas (such as mathematical truths) and truths obtained from "matters of fact" (such as psychological facts). On this classification, Hume's argument that truth is not a virtue of moral assertions is closely related to the emotivists' denial of the factual content of moral judgments. Hume, as well as the emotivists, denied the view that moral assertions are made to pick out truths in the external world. He wrote:

> Reason is the discovery of truth or falsehood. Truth or falsehood consists in an agreement or disagreement either to *real* relations of idea or to *real* existence and matter of fact. Whatever is not susceptible of this agreement or disagreement, is incapable of being true or false, and can never be an object of our reason. Now 'tis evident our passions, volitions, and actions, are not susceptible of any agreement or disagreement..." (T. 458).

Hume's internalism (subjectivism) about moral facts committed him to argue that moral judgments are assertions that describe the feelings and attitudes we have *about* moral events. Impressions of right and wrong *describe* the feelings that we have towards a moral event or character. For Hume, moral claims have descriptive functions, despite its normative content. Moral statements *describe* (but do not *express)* the psychological the attitude or disposition that author has towards a moral situation. In moral judgments, our moral statements assert descriptive facts about our human nature (e.g. facts about our mental states such as desires and beliefs), they do not assert enduring facts about objects that exist in the external world. However, the argument must not be understood in the language of the noncognitivism of the emotivists. By conceiving moral statements as asserting sensible facts about our feelings, Hume's account does not in any way give an impression that he construed moral claims as *expressions* of feelings or attitudes, as the noncognitive emotivists such as Ayer claim. I will return to this shortly, but let me say a bit more about Hume and realists' belief about the function of moral assertions.

For Hume, only mathematical statements, which deal with relations of ideas, have enduring truths that are demonstratively certain. All other assertions, including causal and moral claims, are statements made to project facts or truths onto the world. So, in Hume's philosophy, there is a distinction between moral statements and propositional statements. As we shall see, Hume discussed and rejected realists' concept of propositional statements about factual truths. On the realist concept that Hume rejected, the contents of propositional statements represent pure objective truths locatable in objects that exist in the external world. Hume distinguished moral statements that involve psychological projections that describe our feelings towards a moral event or situation from propositional statements that involve sentential descriptions of external states of affairs. Also, moral statements are judgments about rightness and wrongness of an action, but propositional statements are judgments about truths and falsehoods of an external state of affairs (*Treatise* 3.1.1). So, for Hume, moral facts are psychological reasons. This is distinguishable from non-moral facts or truths about "non-moral" objects, such as truths about stones and trees. Non-moral facts are assertions about truths of facts out there (independent of human sentiments) to be discovered. (See more on this view later.)

Hume's distinction between moral statements and propositional statements can be confused with the "non-cognitivism" of the early twentieth-century emotivists. The apparent similarity here

has a tendency to be misunderstood for Hume's anticipation of the so-called "non-cognitivism" of the emotivists. According to the non-cognitivism of the classical emotivists, at least as we read from Ayer, ethical judgments have no cognitive or factual contents. Therefore, they cannot be said to be literally true or false. Thus, given his denial that moral judgments are truth-assertions, Hume appears a precursor of the non-cognitivism of the classical emotivists. But the connection is a bit fuzzy, so it has to be drawn with caution. Hume was not committed to the non-cognitivism that the emotivists later advocated. Hume certainly denied realist view of objective truths, but his objection involved a rejection of their conception of truths as mind-independent facts. As we shall see, Hume believed that there are moral facts or truths that exist out there in the world, only that they so exist by human construction. In other words, against realists' view, Hume believed that there are moral facts, only that he conceived them as psychological or mind-dependent truths. Such Humean view is completely different from the non-cognitivism of the early emotivists that maintain categorically that there are no such things as moral facts at all.[14]

The noncognitive emotivists, in particular Ayer, endorsed Hume's distinction between truths of relations of ideas and truths of matters of fact, but they generally denied the facticity of psychological moral statements. Moral statements, in their moral system, *express* feelings to evoke action, but does not *assert* facts about human nature (or human psychology) that causally explain the source of their moral motivations. It is true that the emotivists as well as Hume denied the view that the function of ethical statements is a discovery of mind-independent truths out there in nature but they did so by different criteria. The emotivists appealed to their logical principle of "verifiability" but Hume appealed to the psychological principle of regularity.[15] For the emotivist, ethical statements are not empirically verifiable because they have no factual contents; ethical statements are not amenable to empirical observation (verification). Thus, for the emotivists, empirical observation is the test of a cognitively meaningful statement. Ethical expressions are emotionally significant since they are expressed to command an action, though they are not literally (cognitively) significant since they are not descriptive factual claims.[16]

Another important difference between the two must be noted. Although both were empiricists, it is not true that Hume was committed to the logical empiricism that the emotivists later developed. Although their philosophical outlooks appear to share some similarities, the connection is misleading; the seeming similarities are artificial. In his exploration of the history of emotivism in his paper "The background to the emotive theory," consider Patrick McGrath's discovery:

> The emotive theory… is an outgrowth of the ultra empiricist movement known as 'logical positivism', but it is not however a necessary consequence of the application of empiricist theories to ethics. Empiricism has had a long history, but in the past even its most extreme

> exponents, such as Hume and Mill, had treated moral judgments as factual rather than emotive.[17]

A distinction has to be noted between Hume's *psychological empiricism* and the *logical empiricism* of the emotivists, at least as exemplified by Ayer. The logical empiricism of the emotivists is a radical version of empiricism that Hume did not endorse, at least not in the direct sense. There is a radical difference between the logical analytic philosophy of the emotivists and Hume's philosophical psychologism. Hume's philosophical theories are grounded in psychological empiricism but the emotivists' are grounded in their analytic or logical empiricism. Hume was a causal theorist who, both in his science and ethics, studied the mind to explore its causal manifestations in our beliefs and actions. But the emotivists were principally concerned with the logical analyses of the meaningfulness of moral and scientific language (statements). So, the disparity between the philosophical orientations of Hume and the emotivists' is wide. Notice Ayer's explicit declaration of the variation between logical empiricism of the emotivists and Hume's psychological empiricism.

> The discussion of psychological questions is out of place in a philosophical inquiry; and we have already made it clear that our empiricism is not logically dependent on an atomistic psychology, such as *Hume* and Mach adopted.... For the empiricist doctrine to which we are committed is a logical doctrine ... (Ayer, 160-161, my italic).

The alleged psychological atomism of Hume must not be confused with the logical atomism of the emotivists. On his criticism, Ayer would not regard Hume's psychological empiricism as philosophical. True philosophy, on Ayer's view, deals with logical analysis of the meaningfulness of language (moral and scientific), not a psychological account about the causal mechanisms or manifestations of the mind. "The sole function of philosophy," according to Ayer, "is analysis of language. To the emotivists, moral philosophy is simply the analysis of moral language."[18] The emotivists, such as Ayer, who took a positive stand in ethics, were primarily interested in the functional role and value of *emotive languages*.[19] Compared to the logical or analytic empiricism of the sort of the emotivists, Hume does not have a meta-ethical theory of meaning.[20] Hume certainly might have anticipated a theory of that sort, but there is not in him any argument that explicitly commits him to that theory (for good or bad reasons). As A. E. Pitson argues in reference to logical or analytic empiricism, "there are various reasons for supposing that Hume cannot be credited with such a theory--or, indeed, with any considered view of the meaning of moral utterances."[21] At least, for one reason, "Hume's interests in developing his moral theory clearly lie with our perceptions--our impressions and idea--rather than the vocabulary in which they are reported or expressed."[22] Hume's moral theory is actually not a theory about the meaning

of moral language (or terms) or their functional roles. In Hume's moral system, moral judgments assert facts about the psychological states of moral subjects.

I have dissociated Hume from the emotivists on the question of the relevance of naturalistic facts to moral judgments. Though there is a misleading resemblance between their empiricist moral theory, the gap between them is fundamentally wide. But if Hume did not deny the factual content of moral claims, what then is at issue in his fact-value remarks? In what follows, I argue that, in the remarks Hume was engaged in a debate with rationalistic realists. We shall see that Hume argued against their definition of moral facts in non-psychological terms. A moral judgment is made by reference to facts about the psychological states or condition of moral agents.

6.3.1. HUME'S REJECTION OF REALISTS' CONCEPT OF MORAL FACTS

Against the view that Hume was skeptical about the relevance of facts to the formulation of moral judgments, I want to argue in this section that Hume's fact-value remarks involved a defense of moral facts as psychologically projected truths against rationalistic realists' (RR's) conception of moral facts as mind-independent objective truths.

To begin with, I think to argue that Hume saw a disjunctive gap between facts and values would amount to reading too much of Kant into Hume. Kant's departure from Hume's moral sense theory involves his rejection of moral empiricist's idea that moral principles are induced from empirical facts about human nature, particularly, the desires and interests of moral agents. Departing from the moral empiricist's tradition, Kant rejected the mixture of moral values with empirical facts. He sought to segregate moral values in order to keep them pure and untainted.[23] By contrast, defending his empirical naturalism about moral values, Hume saw the mixture of moral values with empirical facts as the best way of grounding morality in a scientific foundation. Since he saw human nature as part of the natural world, in Hume's moral system, the segregation of moral values from empirical facts would amount to ignoring an obvious and important aspect of human existence.[24] The values that we live by and sustain our cooperative relation with others, as we shall see, form part of the facts that constitutes the complete descriptions of the world.

It would be logically appropriate to indict Hume as contradicting his view regarding the place of facts in morality only if in his fact-value remarks, he was arguing about the same kinds of facts in what appears to be his ambiguous references to the notion of facts. That is, Hume's two remarks about the place of facts in moral deliberations are not contradictory. As Falk argues, Hume "was entirely consistent, if not right as well," in his fact-value remarks. According to Falk, Hume appears incoherent only in the way one interprets his argument. He thinks that in Hume's remarks, "problems arise out of an insufficiently careful and sympathetic reading of what Hume

is trying to say."[25] Falk argues that "the 'is-ought' passage becomes intelligible and consistent on what I take to be Hume's over-all view, one expressed quite unambiguously in the *Inquiry* as well as in places in the *Treatise*."[26] In particular, Falk defends the view that, in his fact-value argument, Hume contended that "ought statements are about a kind of *sensibly* testable fact."[27] Falk defends the argument to revise Searle's account that Hume implied in his fact-value remarks the view that "ought" is used to state "institutional fact."[28]

To see that Hume did not assert a contradictory claim in his fact-value remarks, we need to observe that he did not use the notion of "facts" univocally in the two claims that he made about the place of facts in moral decisions. When examined closely, it is clear that Hume's two claims refer to two different kinds of facts. One of his remarks applies to brute physical facts, but the other refers to "psychological facts."[29] In other words, in Hume's moral philosophy, a distinction has to be noted between two different kinds of facts: psychological and non-psychological facts. In most of his arguments, Hume defended the view that moral judgments are determined by no other facts than psychological moral facts. This interpretation is much in line with Falk's argument that, in his 'is-ought' remark, Hume implied the view that "ought-statements are about a kind of *sensibly* testable fact." To examine the idea that, in the fact-value argument, Hume was engaged in a debate with rationalistic realists on the issue of moral facts, let us consider the matter of fact passage closely. The passage runs as follows:

> ...morality consists not in any relations, that are the object of science; but if examin'd will prove with equal certainty, that it consists not in any *matter of fact*, which can be discover'd by the understanding....But can there be any difficulty in proving, that vice and virtue are not matters of fact, whose existence we can infer by reason? Take any action allow'd to be vicious: Wilful murder for instance. Examine it in all lights, if you can find that matter of fact, or real existence, which you call *vice*. In which-ever way you take it, you find only certain passions, motives, volitions and thoughts. *There is no other matter of fact in the case*. The vice entirely escapes you, as long as you consider the object. You never can find it, till you turn your reflection into your own breast, and find a sentiment of disapprobation, which arises in you, towards this action. *Here is a matter of fact; but 'tis the object of feeling, not of reason*. So that when you pronounce any action or character to be vicious, you mean nothing, but that from the constitution of your nature you have a feeling or sentiment of blame from the contemplation of it (*Treatise*, 468-49; emphasis s added).

We must take a closer look at what Hume meant by matters of fact in the passage. Observe in the passage Hume's remark that, besides "passions, motives, volitions and thoughts, *there is no other matter of fact* in the case." We must also observe his reference to "a sentiment of disapprobation" as "*Here is a matter of fact*; but 'tis the object of feeling, not of reason." On the first reference, he argued that moral judgments, such as impressions of vice and virtue, are not defined by facts that are discoverable by the faculty of understanding or reasoning. The argument formed part of his rejection

of rationalistic moral system. Hume's target included rationalists of realist persuasion who conceived moral truths as mind-independent objective facts that exist out there in nature to be discovered by reasoning. He denied the view that moral languages refer to properties of events and states of affairs in the external world. On the realist view that he rejected, we make true judgments about the rightness or wrongness of an action only if our judgments correspond to properties of (or relations between) states of affair that so exist not by human invention or any state of mind. Among the rationalists, whose moral views predominated and were popularly cited when Hume was writing, included the Cambridge Platonic rationalistic realists, such as Ralph Cudworth, Samuel Clarke, and John Balguy.[30] Cudworth, for example, believed that "moral distinctions are reflections on fixed and immutable features of reality."[31] His view of moral truths was influenced by his epistemic belief that "Knowledge, after all, is immutable: it is of things as they are and would not be *knowledge* of them if they could be other than they are."[32] Balguy also believed that "the Foundation of Morality must be laid either in the Truth or Nature of Things themselves."[33] Hume rejected the rationalistic realists' view of moral truths.[34] It was a similar objection that he posited in his matter of fact remarks when he argued that "morality does not consist in...any *matter of fact*, which can be discover'd by the understanding," and "that vice and virtue are not matters of fact, whose existence we can infer by reason."

On Hume's second reference to the concept of facts, as we have noted, we observe in the passage his argument that, in moral judgments, such as the assessment of moral cases of willful murder, "there is no other fact in the case" except "certain passions, motives, volitions and thoughts." Notice his emphasis on the view: "Here is a matter of fact, but 'tis the object of feeling, not reasoning." In the passage, Hume referred to the psychological manifestations of passions, motives, volitions and thoughts as the moral facts that have a real existence and could be pronounced vicious in the assessment of moral cases. This claim in his matter of fact passage was an emphasis on a similar view that he made ten pages earlier in which he described "our passions, volitions, and actions" as "original facts and realities, compleat in themselves" (T. 458). Thus, Hume's second reference to facts in his fact-value argument involved a positive argument that moral judgments require reference to psychological moral facts. He posited the argument to reject RR's conception of moral facts to consist in mind-independent objective truths. Moral facts are, for Hume, truths that we project or pronounce about moral events based on the extent to which our sentiments are touched by the events.

Now, it is important to emphasize that I do not think that Hume, in the argument, denied the obvious truth that we do require brute or physical facts, such as gun, knife, or blood evidence, in investigations and judgments about murder cases. His argument rather was that any verdict or truth

that a moral judge finally passes about a moral case is a pronouncement based on how her sentiments or feelings (sympathy) were touched by her examination of the facts. Though they are facts, physical evidence are not in themselves the *moral facts* about which we are *ultimately* concerned when we are passing judgments about the moral status (or quality, whether guilty or innocent) of a moral event. *Moral facts* describe human sentiments; they are not descriptions of brute *physical facts*. Besides moral facts that describe the sentiments of *moral judges*, Hume in the passage talked also about moral facts that describe psychological states of *moral agents* (or in his example, the murderer), such as their character, motives and intentions. This view is an insistence on his contention that *physical facts* or evidence are not in themselves the *moral facts* or truths we are directly concerned with in moral assessments. On Hume's thought, physical evidence are mere signs or outward descriptions of the motive that the agent had for the action in question. Consider Hume's argument that declared external (non-psychological) facts as merely signs of the actual moral facts we ought to be concerned with in passing judgments about the viciousness of a moral action.

> 'Tis evident, that when we praise any actions, we regard only the motives that produced them, and consider the actions as signs or indications of certain principles in the mind and temper. The external performance has not merit. We must look within to find the moral quality. This we cannot do directly; and therefore fix our attention on actions, as on external signs. But these actions are as signs; and the ultimate object of our praise and approbation is the motive, that produced them (T. 477).

Hume's rejection of rationalistic moral system involved a defense of "subjective naturalism" (i.e., subjectivism about naturalistic moral facts) against RR about morality.[35] According to his moral system, to be a naturalist in morality is to be a subjectivist about moral facts. He implicitly believed that if there could be such things as moral facts (as he believed there are), they could be psychological facts. In his fact-value argument, he drew a distinction between moral facts and non-moral facts.[36] Certainly, the natural world contains non-psychological natural facts. But, judgments about moral actions (for example, assessments whether an action is ethically right or wrong) are problems about the intentions (motives) and character of moral agents. Intentions and character are psychological states. Therefore, the assessment of moral actions and character requires information (facts) about the psychological states or condition of moral agents. Hence, moral facts are psychological facts. Hume was committed to the view that moral actions are psychologically determined by human intentions. The concept of intention here refers to a comprehensive network of psychological dispositions, such as motives, wishes, desires, and beliefs. Moral behaviours are intentional or conscious actions. Intentional actions are distinguishable from other mechanical and physical behaviours, such as the "tom-tom" beat of the

heart, or the kicking and screaming behaviour of a person chained hand and foot to a running wheel. Only behaviours with intentional contents are worth of moral approbation.

Hume's argument implicitly suggests the view that moral realists have an inadequate understanding of the concept of moral facts. By identifying moral judgments as assessments of facts external to the psychological or mental states of moral agents, external realists have a wrong understanding of the concept of moral facts; they ground moral judgments in non-moral facts (but not in moral facts). Psychological moral facts are distinguishable from non-moral facts about non-psychological objects. Moral judgments are internal facts about motives (intentions) or character; moral actions are dictated by motives and character (or habit). In Hume's words, "when we praise any actions, we regard only the motives that produced them…The external performance has not merit. We must look within to find the moral quality…. (T. 477). External facts (e.g., facts about environmental or social conditions) may condition us to act in a particular way. But for Hume, external facts are involuntary conditions that need not be depended upon s*olely* in the assessment of the criminality of a person. In moral judgments, truths about the motives (intentions) or character of the person are the primary moral facts we ought to consider and analyze. Hume wrote:

> After the same manner, when we require any action, or blame a person for not performing it, we always suppose, that one in that situation shou'd be influenc'd by the proper motive of that action, and we esteem it vicious in him to be regardless of it. If we find, upon enquiry, that the virtuous motive was still powerful over his breast, tho' checked in its operation by some circumstances unknown to us, we retract our blame, and have the same esteem for him, as if he had actually perform'd the action, which we require of him. (T. 477-78)

A mistake of fact originating from an external or involuntary source or circumstance that caused a person to form wrong beliefs and desires to act in a given way is not morally incriminating, Hume reminds us.

> …false judgments may be thought to affect the passions and actions, which are connected with them….But tho' this be acknowledg'd, it is easy to observe, that these errors are so far from being the source of all immorality, that they are commonly very innocent, and draw no manner of guilt upon the person who is so unfortunate as to fall into them. They extend not beyond a mistake of *fact*, which moralists have not generally suppos'd criminal, as being perfectly involuntary (T. 459, italics in the original).

External facts, such as an involuntarily willed environmental condition over which a person has no control are not the facts we need to depend upon to pass moral judgments on a person. As Hume argued, "if these moral relations cou'd be applied to external objects, it wou'd follow, that even inanimate beings wou'd be susceptible of moral beauty and deformity," which would be odd (T. 465). Instead, the information that is basically required for making moral judgments is facts

about motives, intentions or character. These are internal facts that describe the psychological states or motives of a moral agent. Therefore, internal or psychological facts are the data required for moral judgments.

I have emphasized the argument to highlight the view that Hume believed in the relevance of moral facts to moral deliberations, only that he conceived them as psychological facts. Moral truths are facts that exist out there in nature according to how we perceive them. Therefore, moral facts are, on Hume's moral thought, mind-dependent truths. He defended the concept of mind-dependent facts against external realists' conception of moral facts as mind-independent truths. On the realist conception, moral facts represent brute facts whose existence out there has nothing to do with the states of our minds or judgments.

6.3.2. A RESPONSE TO CONTEMPORARY HUMEAN REALISTS

My argument that Hume developed subjective naturalism against rationalistic realism rejects contemporary interpretation of Hume as a naturalistic realist. Here, I want to defend the view that the attribution to Hume the realist view that moral reality is representation independent is misleading. I use the interpretation by John P. Wright as my point of departure for my rejection of the Humean realists' argument.

John Wright persistently denies the view that Hume rejected realists' belief that objective reality is representation independent. Instead, Wright argues forcibly in his *The Sceptical realism of David Hume* (1983) that Hume was a realist who believed that our ideas and impressions are signs of representation-independent reality.[37] According to his argument, "Hume considered ideas to be natural signs of an independent reality."[38] He defends his interpretation of Hume as a realist from the standpoints of Hume's epistemology and metaphysics.[39] He grounds his interpretation in the argument that Hume adopted a skeptical philosophical attitude only to defend his realism about the causal order, including human behaviour.[40] Therefore, Wright sees no incompatibility between Hume's scepticism and his realism. On his view, Hume did not see any "incompatibility between the skeptical and realist sides of his philosophy."[41] Wright tries to merge Hume's skepticism with his realism.[42] He believes that "Hume's skeptical account of the limits of human understanding complements his realism."[43] That is, "Hume ties his conception of human knowledge to that of *adequate representation"* (Wright, 1983). What Wright means is that Hume believed the view that "when ideas adequately represent objects, those properties of the ideas which are discoverable by reason (relations, contradictions and agreements) also apply to the objects" (ibid.). Wright concludes that "Hume clearly makes knowledge dependent upon a contingent relation between idea and object which is bound up with the notion of adequate

representation."[44] Insisting on his interpretation of Hume as committed to a realist conception of reality as representation-independent, Wright continuous to persistently argue in his "Critical Study: Wayne Waxman's *Hume's Theory of Consciousness*" that Hume "clearly subscribed to a representative theory of knowledge."[45]

Wright's interpretation is grounded in Hume's epistemology and metaphysics but his account of Hume's view of scientific reality applies equally to Hume's view of moral reality. In other words, though Wright may resist the connection, his interpretation that Hume was committed to a realist's view that impressions and ideas are signs or representations of mind-independent reality suggests the view that Hume was committed to a realist view of moral reality. For, Hume's moral philosophy is continuous with his epistemology or science (including his metaphysics). In particular, Hume extended his epistemological and metaphysical accounts of the nature of impressions and ideas he delineated in the first two books of the *Treatise* to his account of moral impressions and ideas that he espoused in the third book. For example, he held the same view about the warranted basis of both our epistemic and moral beliefs, including our epistemic and moral ideas and impressions. Consider Hume's own declaration in a pamphlet that he attached to the end of book two of the *Treatise* to introduce and advertise the third book. "*I think it proper to inform the public, that tho' this be a third volume of the* Treatise of Human Nature, *yet 'tis in some measure independent of the other two.... It must only be observ'd, that I continue to make use of the terms*, impressions and ideas, *in the same sense as formerly.*"[46] The argument that Hume was a realist who construed the underlying reality of our ideas and impressions (moral or epistemic) as representation-independent is inconsistent with Hume's subjective naturalism (SN). Wright's realist account flies in the face of some familiar passages in which Hume explicitly stated his rejection of rationalistic realism (RR). Hume's defense of SN against RR is particularly glaring in some passages in which he conceived moral values on the same status as secondary qualities. Comparing moral values to secondary qualities, Hume in the passages rejected RR's conception of moral values as representation-independent qualities in moral phenomena. In the comparison, he rejected the idea that moral values (like secondary qualities) are representation-independent qualities discernible in moral objects. Hume defended the argument in a footnote that appears in the first two editions of his *Enquiry* (cf. section 1). In the passage, Hume referred to Francis Hutcheson as also committed to the same argument.[47]

> That faculty by which we discern truth and falsehood, and that by which we perceive vice and virtue, had long been confounded with each other; and all morality was supposed to be built on eternal and immutable relations which, to every intelligent mind, were equally invariable as any proposition concerning quantity or number. But a later philosopher [i.e., Hutcheson] has thought us, by the most convincing arguments, that morality is nothing in the abstract nature of things, but is entirely relative to the sentiment or mental taste of each particular being, in the same manner as the distinctions of sweet and bitter, hot and

> cold arise from the particular feeling of each sense or organ. Moral properties, therefore, ought not to be classed with the operations of the understanding, but with the tastes or sentiments.[48]

Observe Hume's emphasis on the argument in his "The Sceptics."

> Were I not afraid of appearing too philosophical, I should remind my reader of that famous doctrine, supposed to be fully proved in modern times, 'That tastes and colours, and all other sensible qualities, lie not in the bodies, but merely in the senses.' The case is the same with beauty and deformity, virtue and vice ("The Sceptics," 166).[49]

It must be observed that, in all the passages that Hume compared moral values to secondary qualities, he denied RR's idea that moral qualities (values) are enduring properties located in objects that exist out there in the natural world. This observation is inconsistent with realists' view that conceives moral qualities on the model of primary qualities, qualities that are so located and are what they are independent of how we conceive them. Hume's subjectivism about moral facts warrants us in being suspicious of the accuracy of realists' attribution to him a belief in representation-independent objective reality, moral or non-moral.[50] As we have seen in the passages that he placed moral values on the same status as secondary values, Hume's subjective naturalism actually rejects realists' conception of moral facts as mind-independent reality.

On my own view, subjective naturalism about moral reality is more scientifically intelligible than realists' conception of moral reality as mind-independent. Realists hold a mysterious and unscientific view about moral reality. Its conception of moral reality as mind-independent is misled by "naïve" realism about objective reality.[51] Certainly, our ordinary moral judgments involve a claim to objectivity. The belief in objective values is part of our ordinary moral thoughts and languages. But our ordinary conception of objectivity as a value that exists out there in the world independent of how we conceive it is misleading.[52] Undeniably, objectivity is an impersonal value that exists in the social world which our moral judgments must reflect. But they exist out there by our projection according to our system of values and mutual interests. Therefore, it is misleading to conceive the objectivity of moral facts as mind-independent in the sense of transcending our intentions. Objective truths depend on their serviceability to us.[53] Our commonsense beliefs in mind-independent objective reality of moral facts are grounded in a misleading analogy that we often draw from our conception of scientific objectivity. Because we rightly believe that scientific objectivity must be a publicly accessible truth, a value that is not privileged to any single person's or group of people's beliefs and judgments, we misleadingly conclude that objective scientific claims are independent of human intentions. But this conclusion is false. We are "naïve" about scientific truths.

Recently, some scientists have accepted the idea that even modern physics is inconsistent with our ordinary naïve realism about science.[54] As the scientist, J. R. Wheeler, argues, "the universe does not exist 'out there' independent of us. We are inescapably involved in bringing about that which appears to be happening. We are not only observers, we are participants…in making [the] past as well as the present and the future."[55] We are actively involved in shaping our world according to how we want it to be, especially in satisfying our needs, interests, and according to our value systems. The realists' conception of reality as mind-independent wants us to see the world from "God's-eye view." This makes us passive observers rather than active participants. This view is overly pessimistic about human intelligence and creative abilities.[56] The view does not capture the idea that the nature of reality, as we have it, exists by social construction as we see fit. As I argue in chapter seven, moral facts are social scientific truths.[57] As Iris Murdoch argues in support of a similar idea,

> 'facts' are set up as such by human (that is moral) agents. Much of our life is taken up by truth-seeking, imagining, questioning. We relate to facts through truth and truthfulness, and come to recognize and discover that there are different modes and levels of insight and understanding. In many familiar ways *various* values pervade and *colour* what we take to be the reality of our world; wherein we constantly evaluate our own values and those of others, and judge and determine forms of consciousness and modes of being.[58]

As social scientific truths, moral facts are coloured by the beliefs, desires, and interests of our social-moral community. In this sense, we cannot coherently construe them as representation-independent. Their validity depends upon their agreement and ratification by our social community. It is in this sense that they may be construed as conventional norms and practices on the model of other social institutions, such as money and language. Social-moral reality exists out there in the world by human (social) construction.

Now, it needs to be clarified that, by arguing that Hume rejected the realists' view of the objective reality of moral values, I do not intend to play down the complex nature of his argument. It must be acknowledged that Hume's position on the issue is ambiguous. Based on some passages, the account by Humean realists appears to be correct: Hume sometimes made some remarks that seemed to commit him to a realist view that locates impressions and ideas of moral values (qualities) in moral events and character. As he remarked in one place, "the very essence of virtue, according to this hypothesis is to produce pleasure, and that of vice to give pain. The virtue and vice must be part of our character in order to excite pride or humility" (T. 296). He reminded us also in his "Of Vice and Virtue" (*Treatise* II. I. VII) that he did not reject the "opinion of those, who maintain that morality is something real, essential, and founded on nature" (T. 296). Hume's arguments in these passages and many more seem inconsistent with the

passages we noted earlier in which he compared moral values to secondary qualities. Thus, the question regarding the location of objective qualities of moral values, in Hume's moral thought, is a complex issue. We require a little more attention to capture his committed position.

Closer attention to the general character of his moral theory reveals that Hume identified the objective reality of moral values neither with moral objects nor with moral sentiments *as such*. This is the complex position he held in the debate regarding the source of the objectivity of moral qualities (values). Hume, in a way, located the power that gives us the impressions and ideas of moral values (especially the notions of vice and virtue) in the *responsive relation* between our sentiments and moral objects or events. We glean this idea from Hume's argument in the *Treatise:*

> As moral good and evil belong only to the actions of the mind, and are deriv'd from our situation with regard to external objects, *the relations, from which these moral distinctions arise, must lie only betwixt internal actions, and external objects,* and must not be applicable either to internal actions, compared among themselves, or external objects, when placed in opposition to other external objects (T. 464-65, emphasis added).

We capture the argument more fully from a "revised position", so to speak, that Hume took in his "Of Vice and Virtue" (*Treatise* II. I. VII) regarding the question whether impressions of vice and virtue are causally produced by our sentiment *alone* or produced by qualities in external objects. His discussion involved a response to a controversy in his generation whether the impressions and ideas from which we judge (assess) moral character as vicious or virtuous have either objective or subjective foundation. He considered each of the two arguments as true only to some extent.[59] He sought to revise the arguments to show that the two arguments can be, in a way, reconciled. Declaring his position in the debate, he wrote: "my system maintains its ground upon either of those hypotheses; which will be a strong proof of its solidity. For granting that morality had no foundation in nature, it must still be allow'd that vice and virtue, either from self-interest or the prejudices of education, produce in us a real pain and pleasure"(T. 295). Consider in the following passage Hume's outline of the argument by the first group of the debate, and notice his agreement.

> Every passion, habit, or turn of character, (say they) [i.e., the first group] which has a tendency to our advantage or prejudices of education, give a delight or uneasiness; and 'tis from thence the approbation or disapprobation arises.... But I go further, and observe that this moral hypothesis and my present system not only agree together, but also that, allowing the former to be just, 'tis an absolute and invincible proof of the latter...The very essence of virtue, according to this hypothesis, is to produce pleasure, and that of vice to give pain...What further proof can we desire for the double relation of impressions and ideas? (T. 295-296).

Observe Hume's view that the argument (by the first group, which he concurred) is implied by the argument by the second group. Continuing the above argument, he wrote:

> The same unquestionable argument may be deriv'd from the opinion of those [i.e., the second group], who maintain that morality is something real, essential, and founded in nature. The most probable hypothesis, which has been advance'd to explain the distinction betwixt vice and virtue, and the origin of moral rights and obligations, is, that from a primary constitution of nature, certain characters and passions, by the very view and contemplation, produce a pain, and others in like manner excite pleasure. The uneasiness and satisfaction are not only inseparable from vice and virtue, but constitute their very nature and essence. To approve of a character is to feel an original delight upon its appearance. To disapprove of it is to be sensible of an uneasiness. The pain and pleasure, therefore, being the primary causes of vice and virtue, must also be the causes of all their effects.... (T. 296).

Reconciling the two positions, Hume concluded: "one hypothesis of morality is an undeniable proof of the foregoing system, and the other at worst agrees with it" (196-297). A Humean moral realist may rely on the second passage to support the view that Hume adopted a realist's position to locate moral values in moral character, but never considered moral values as impressions produced by our sentiments. But the interpretation would fail to consider the other half of the debate that Hume attempted to reconcile with the second. Hume's position in the debate involved the view that sentiments (such as pleasure and uneasiness) are the *primary cause* of impressions of vice and virtue, though they are objectively real in the sense that the sentiments that causally produce them are activated by the appearance or contemplation of a character. On this position, Hume accepted subjectivists' view that moral judgments are about our psychological states, such as pleasure and uneasiness towards an observed or contemplated character. But he rejected the view that the position involved a denial of the objective reality of moral values. In so arguing, he accepted also the view that "morality is something real, essential," though he denied the view that the reality of moral values entails the idea that they are mind-independent (i.e., independent of how we experience them). Impressions of vice and virtue are, by themselves, not qualities in nature as such. Rather, as Hume put it in the second passage, "to approve of a character is *to feel an original delight upon its appearance*. To disapprove of it is to be sensible of an uneasiness."

Hume defended his view of the causal process by which we obtain moral impressions more strongly in his paper, "Of the Standard of Taste. [60] In this work, he compared moral judgments (appreciation of vice and virtue) to aesthetic or beauty appreciation. He investigated the mechanism or process by which the mind forms an appreciation of aesthetic and moral beauties. According to his findings, impressions of moral and aesthetic beauties are obtained through the concurrent operations of the sensible faculty (the sentiments) and the understanding counterpart of the mind. In the paper, Hume declared that his "intention in this essay is to mingle

some light of the understanding with the feelings of sentiment" (*Taste:* 272). He discovered that the sentiments for acquiring beauty and taste impressions are sometimes activated by certain perceived objects. In Hume's words, "though it be certain, that beauty and deformity, more than sweet and bitter, are not qualities in objects, but belong entirely to the sentiment, internal and external; it must be allowed, that there are certain qualities in objects, which are fitted by nature to produce those particular feelings" (*Taste:* 273). Primarily, impressions of moral and aesthetic values are acquired through our sentiments. But this sensible faculty, to have a steady rule for judging well, first needs to be activated and conditioned by a perceived object or character. "Those finer emotions of the mind are of a very tender and delicate nature, and require the concurrence of many favourable circumstances to make them play with facility and exactness, according to their general and established principles"(*Taste*: 270). In beauty appreciation (moral and non-moral), the sensible mind is required to be properly conditioned and be placed in the proper time and geographical context of the object of our judgment (appreciation).

> When we would, and would try the force of any beauty and deformity, we must choose with care a proper time and place, and bring the fancy to a suitable situation and disposition. A perfect serenity of mind, a recollection of thought, a due attention to the object; if any of these circumstances be wanting, our experiment will be fallacious, and we shall be unable to judge of the catholic and universal beauty. The relation, which nature has placed between the form and the sentiment, will at least be more obscure; and it will require greater accuracy to trace and discern it (*Taste:* 270-1).

Now, I indicated in chapters one and two the view that Hume's moral science is grounded in his naturalistic defense of continuity between morality and science. But we have just seen in our discussion that Hume was a subjectivist about moral facts. How could he consistently defend morality as a scientific discourse on a somewhat similar status of the empirical sciences and yet consider moral facts as psychological truths?[61] The problem is a puzzle about the scientific status of the so-called psychological facts in which Hume's naturalism is grounded. I turn in the next section to explore and provide a Humean response to the problem.

6.4. THE CONCEPT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL MORAL FACTS: A HUMEAN ACCOUNT

We have noted that Hume conceived of naturalistic moral facts as psychological facts. But it may be asked: Can there be such things as "psychological facts"? The concept of "psychological facts" may seem mysterious to us, given our ordinary conception of facts to refer to truths about the external world. In our ordinary thinking, and in our prevailing philosophical tradition, we tend to use the notion of facts typically to refer to non-psychological objective states of affairs. Both in moral and scientific cases, when we make claims about facts, we are usually concerned with objective

truths which transcend how we feel. It is only in the non-psychological sense that we conceive facts as objective. Hence, the concept of psychological facts seems inconsistent to our ordinary (and our common philosophical) way of thinking. Therefore, it may be argued that even if we grant the view that Hume believed the naturalistic assumption that moral judgments require reference to moral facts, his concept of facts is mysterious; it does not fit in with our ordinary view of facts. This section addresses the problem. The discussion calls to attention Hume's effort to correct our narrow ontological view of facts of which the natural world is constituted. In so doing, he tried to break the hold of Cartesian and Lockean ontological dualism on our ordinary belief about the factual ontology of the world. We shall see that Hume rejected the view that psychological facts (among which he classified moral facts) transcend naturalistic or scientific study. I call the argument Humean because I may go beyond what Hume explicitly said and regard some of my claims as implied by some of his views.[62]

The concept of "psychological facts" may sound odd to us because it does not conform to our ordinary concept of facts. The realists who conceive moral judgments as informed by facts that are external to, and independent of, our psychological states and conditions are misled by our ordinary view which restricts the concept of facts to truths about non-psychological physical entities and relations.[63] In the ordinary view, the natural world is made up of non-psychological physical facts--facts about physically or empirically observable entities and relations. On this view, descriptions about human psychological dispositions and experiences, such as beliefs and desires, do not fall within the factual ontology of the natural world. Subsequently, in our ordinary view, the scientific or naturalistic phenomena that are studied by the sciences do not include psychological phenomena. Scientific phenomena are strictly brute facts about physical properties and relations.

Our ordinary view of the facts, which fall within the domain of scientific study and explanation, has a formidable philosophical foundation. It is supported by Cartesian and Lockean philosophical theories about the factual scope and limit of the empirical world, including the facts that fall within the compass of empirical study. The disparity that Descartes and Locke ontologically drew between the mental and the physical in the seventeenth century set a limit to the boundary of the natural world and the facts of which it is constituted. It further defined the limits of facts that, in their view, fall within the scope of empirical study. In Lockean-Cartesian ontological view, the facts that constitute the natural world are entirely made up of pure physical particles in fields of force, which excludes psychological facts. Construing the natural world as constituted of brute physical facts, Locke restricted empirical discourses to the study of brute facts modelled on the pattern of primary qualities. This excluded psychological, and thus moral, facts on the model of secondary qualities. Similarly, Descartes restricted the limit and scope of an empirical study to facts about

spatial objects that have shape, size and can undergo motions. Psychological facts are beyond empirical or scientific investigations. Construing the mind as a non-spatial indivisible spiritual substance, he thought it could not be located in the physical or scientific world. Since for him the horizon of science is limited to the domain of the physical world, it has no place for the non-physical mind.[64]

Now, the fact that the concept of "psychological facts" seems puzzling to our ordinary thought by no means implies that the concept is absurd, philosophically. We must note that not all of our ordinary concepts are coherent. Also, in our ordinary setting, we are sometimes naïve, and have a limited ontological understanding of many facts about the world and ourselves. Not all of our commonsense conceptions are accurate. They need to be philosophically shored up, clarified, made coherent, and expanded. Hume believed in this serviceable task of philosophy. He wrote his *Treatise* to be read by the ordinary public. Consider his advertisement that introduces the third book, "Of Moral": *"I think it proper to inform the publick, that...I am hopeful it (i.e., the Treatise) may be understood by ordinary readers, with little attention as is usually given to any books of reasoning."*[65] He defined the job of a philosopher to include the task of clarifying to methodize our ordinary conceptions. Generally, he believed the view that "philosophical decisions are nothing but the reflections of common life, methodized and corrected" (*Enquiry*, 162).

Though he attempted to correct, methodize and ground our ordinary conceptions in a scientific foundation, Hume did not advise philosophers to reject commonsense beliefs. As he clarified,

> A correct *judgment* observes a contrary method, and avoiding all distant and high enquiries, confines itself to common life, and to such subjects as fall under daily practice and experience.... Those who have propensity to philosophy, will still continue their researches; ...But they will never be tempted to go beyond common life, so long as they consider the imperfection of those faculties which they employ, their narrow reach, and their inaccurate operations.[66]

What Hume labelled as "*mitigated* scepticism or *academical* philosophy" (*Enquiry*, Book I, Part III, Section XII) simply involved a recognition of the limitations of our ordinary intellectual faculties, especially their ability to justify our factual and moral beliefs on the same objective status as mathematical truths. Given his awareness of our natural lack of abilities to infallibly justify our ordinary beliefs, what Hume thought he could do was to "render common sense consistent with itself by presenting it in a coherent and sophisticated fashion."[67] In the *Treatise*, Hume stressed the view that "true philosophy approaches nearer to the sentiments of the vulgar [i.e., the ordinary person]" (T. 222-223). We observe that Hume's philosophical commitment involved an effort to clarify, correct, expand and methodize our ordinary views about the world. A success of this task is not far fetched.

For example, our previous ordinary beliefs in demons have now been philosophically and scientifically corrected; we now believe, thanks to advancement in knowledge, that there are no such things as demons or witches that cause the behaviour of someone with a severe psychosis. Hume believed in a similar conviction that our commonsense ontological and moral beliefs, especially about the concept of facts, needed a philosophical correction and clarification in scientific terms.

It is striking to observe that Hume's philosophical system revolutionarily departs from the Lockean-Cartesian ontological view that supports ordinary conception of facts to exclude psychological reasons and descriptions from the factual ontology of the natural world. He was displeased with the prevailing understanding of facts that had been delineated about humankind and reality. A principal attention of his philosophical task involved a concern about how he could expand the limited ontological view of his predecessors, which not only excluded human experiences from nature, but also undercut it from scientific explanations. He set up his philosophical system to revolutionize the existing view in order to, not only scientifically understand human experience, but also scientifically explain why they think, feel and behave the ways they do (T. 283). He was led by this objective to propound a naturalistic account, which markedly expands our ordinary limited view of the factual ontology of the natural world to include psychological facts, among which he included moral facts.

Hume particularly attempted to correct the Lockean-Cartesian dualism that excluded psychological facts from the scientific ontology of the world. Though he accepted the Lockean-Cartesian classification of facts into primary and secondary qualities, he rejected their denial of the scientific character of secondary qualities (among which he identified moral facts). In his moral system, he rejected the idea that psychological facts are scientifically irreconcilable with physical facts; he rejected the idea that psychological facts are not amenable to scientific study. He challenged the belief that facts about mental phenomena (including morality) cannot be objectively studied, described, or explained, naturalistically by any scientific means. In contrast with the Lockean-Cartesian thought, Hume considered secondary qualities as real; their objective reality emerges from communal projections (construction). He dissociated himself from the view of the modern philosophers that denied the reality and objectivity of secondary qualities. Hume's argument is a bit complex and confusing. Therefore, a careful attention is required to capture his defense of objective reality of secondary qualities, among which he classified moral qualities.

A casual reader may misunderstand the crux of Hume's argument. His references to secondary qualities, such as taste and color, may be misinterpreted as an effort to distinguish them from the objective or scientific reality of primary qualities. But this was not his argument. In some of the passages in which he contrasted secondary qualities to real objective qualities, Hume

made specific references to the modern Lockean-Cartesian view. In the references, he questioned the modern (Cartesian-Lockean) dualism about primary-secondary qualities, in terms of their objective and scientific status. As Corliss Swain argues, "Hume tends to dissociate himself from the view that secondary qualities are not real. The passages where he makes comparison between moral qualities and secondary qualities all contain a hedge or qualification."[68] The qualifications are references to the modern views that rejected the objective reality of secondary qualities. For example, he wrote in the *Treatise*, "Vice and virtue…may be compar'd to sounds, colour, heat and cold, which *according to the modern philosophy,* are not qualities in objects, but perceptions in the mind" (T. 469, italics added). He wrote also in his paper, "The Sceptic," "That taste and colours, and all other sensible qualities, lie not in the bodies but merely in the senses as one that is '*supposed to be fully proved in modern times.*"[69]

In his references to the modern view, Hume was rebutting the Cartesian-Lockean rejection of the scientific status (objective reality) of secondary qualities. This was the critical argument that engaged his attention in his "Of the modern philosophy" (Section IV. Part IV. Book I of the *Treatise*). In his critical review of the secondary-primary quality distinction made by modern philosophers, Hume rejected the denial of the objective reality of secondary qualities, such as colour, taste, feelings, etc., among which he classified moral qualities (values). According to his argument, the reality of secondary qualities is denied in virtue of being internal facts, as compared to what realists consider as intrinsic qualities of objects in the physical or external world. On the modern thought, colour and all the secondary qualities are mental qualities, contingent upon how colored objects appear to an observer. Something is colored, according to the modern view, in a particular way depending on the angle and background light from which it appears to the eye of the beholder. Hume spoke better to the point. "Colors reflected from the clouds change according to the distance of the clouds, and according to the angle they make with the eye and luminous body" (T. 226). Similarly, "[u]pon the different situations of our health: A man in a malady feels disagreeable taste in meat, which before pleas'd him the most" (T. 226). These are contrasted with the so-called primary qualities, such as extension and motion, which the modern realists construed as mind-independent intrinsic qualities.[70]

In response, Hume argued that only "the opinion of most extravagant skepticism" would deny the objective reality of secondary qualities (T. 228). In terms of the manner of their objective reality, Hume placed both secondary and primary qualities on the same footing. Consider his argument. "Now 'tis evident, that, whatever may be our philosophical opinion, colours, sounds, heat and cold, as far as appears to the senses, exist after the same manner with motion and solidity, and that the difference that we make betwixt them in this respect, arises not

from the mere perception" (T. 192). Hume claimed that it is not only secondary qualities, but also primary qualities, that have no mind-independent objective representations in the world. Hume's argument formed part of his discussion of what he called "double existence," *viz.*, the source of our beliefs in (a) the continued existence of objects when they are not presently experienced, and (b) the distinct existence of objects from the mind and our perception. Though Hume discussed them separately, he thought the two are not mutually exclusive; both are questions about why we ordinarily believe that the objective existence of objects is mind- or perception-independent.

In the discussion of the double existence problem, Hume was developing an "error theory," but, failing to recognize it, realists confound it for Hume's commitment to realism about objective reality. But in the discussion, Hume argued that what we ordinarily conceive of as mind-independent reality or existence is nothing but something we ascribe or project onto the world. Consider Hume's use of the words "attribute" and "suppose" in his outline of the double-existence questions. In relation to the *question "What causes induce us to believe in the existence of the body*?" Hume responded this way: "We ought to examine apart those two questions, which are commonly confounded together, *viz*. Why we *attribute* a CONTINU'D existence to objects, even when they are not present to the senses; and why we *suppose* them to have an existence DISTINCT from the mind and perception" (T. 187-188; my italics).[71] Or to see more clearly Hume's view that what we mistakenly conceive of as representation independent reality is just something that exists out there by human projection, consider his other remark in the same paragraph as the one quoted above. "[A]s to the notion of external existence, when taken for something specifically different from our perceptions, we have already shown its absurdity" (T. 188). By defending the view that the objective existence of physical properties is a projected reality, Hume was arguing against modern philosophers, who, by considering them as mind-independent properties, placed their scientific status above secondary qualities.[72]

Placing them on equal footing, Hume argued that anyone who denies the reality of secondary qualities simply because they are mind-dependent has to deny also the objective reality of primary qualities; they all sail in the same boat, so to speak. Consider his argument. "If colours, sounds, tastes, and smells be merely perceptions, nothing we can conceive is possest of a real, continu'd, independent existence; not even motion, extension and solidity, which are the primary qualities chiefly insisted on" (T. 228). According to his emphasis, "upon the removal of sounds, colours, heat, cold, and other sensible qualities, from the rank of continu'd independent existence, we are reduc'd merely to what are called primary qualites, as the only *real* ones, of which we have any adequate notion" (T. 227). What he meant was the view that "after the exclusion of colours, sounds, heat and cold from the rank of external existence, there remains

nothing, which can afford us a just and consistent idea of body" (T. 229). But we cannot deny the commonsense belief in the objective reality of bodily substances, despite the fact that they are not purely mind-independent representations.[73] Notice Hume's argument in the following passage.

> Thus the sceptic still continues to reason and believe, even tho' he asserts, that he cannot defend his reason by reason [i.e. by rational or inferential proof and justification]; and by the same rule he must assent to the principle concerning the existence of body, tho' he cannot pretend by any arguments of philosophy to maintain its veracity. Nature has not left this to his choice, and has doubtless esteem'd it an affair of to great importance to be trusted to our uncertain reasonings and speculations. We may well ask, *What causes induce us to believe in the existence of body?* but 'tis in vain to ask, Whether there be body or not? That is a point, which we must take for granted in all our reasonings (T. 187).

Hume's argument in the passage involved the view that the ontological idea of the existence of bodily things is a natural belief that is forced upon us by the way the world is; hence it cannot be intelligible denied. So, he conceived of the philosophically interesting problem to consist in the explanatory question regarding "the *causes* that induce us to believe in the existence of body," but not simply whether or not there is a body (T. 187-188). In the same way, Hume believed that secondary qualities, like primary qualities, are real objective phenomena in the world, though causally they so exist by human construction.[74]

On the basis of his naturalistic view of mental states and experiences, Hume scientifically systematized psychological facts, among which he included moral facts, and thereby counted them among the facts that constitute the ontology of the natural world. He perceived human minds as not strangers in nature, but inextricably parts of it.[75] This is the idea behind what has passed (rightly) as Hume's "projectivism."[76] All facts (primary or secondary) are for Hume psychological projections. For, in his view, the mind has a power to spread itself onto nature. Let me allow Hume to speak for himself.

> [T]he mind has a great propensity to spread itself on external objects, and to conjoin with them any internal impressions, which they occasion, and which always make their appearance at the same time that these objects discover themselves to the senses…'tis sufficient to observe, that the same propensity is the reason, why we suppose necessity and power to lie in the objects we consider, not in our mind, that considers them; not withstanding it is not possible for us to form the most distant idea of that quality, when it is not taken for the determination of the mind, to pass from the idea of an object to that of its usual attendant (T. 167).

Hume believed that human psychological experiences can be projected onto reality and be counted as an integral part of nature.[77] Our scientific descriptions of the world are not complete, when our psychological facts about human experiences are excluded. Hume subsequently believed that facts about humanity and their psychological dispositions conform to the scientifically intelligible world of

nature.[78] As scientifically intelligible phenomena, Hume believed that human experiences and behaviours, like any scientific phenomena, are naturalistically explainable.[79]

Generally, our discussion in this section has demonstrated the view that Hume's ontological view of the natural world, and the facts of which it is constituted, is a revolutionary departure from the view held by his predecessors, notably Descartes and Locke, which, in defining humanity as purely rational, placed them and their experiences above nature. As we have seen, their limited ontological view, which undercuts psychological phenomena from the natural world, further led them to believe that human experiences transcend empirical or naturalistic explications. By contrast, convinced that human beings are part of the natural ontology, as we have seen, Hume thought we can naturalistically study their psychological states, dispositions and behaviours. Their beliefs, desires and interests (moral or non-moral) are all within scientific explanation.

Hume's naturalistic moral system was crucially informed by his naturalistic ontological view of psychological phenomena and experiences. In defending his subjective naturalism about morality, he called to attention two possible types of facts of which the natural world is constituted, psychological moral facts (facts about our mental states and moral sentiments or dispositions), and non-moral facts (non-psychological facts such as guns and knives). Hume followed his naturalistic system to call to attention the view that the facts that constitute the natural world include mind-dependent or psychological moral facts, among which includes moral beliefs, desires and interests. In his fact-value remarks, he contrasted psychological moral facts (which include moral values) with non-psychological facts. Psychological reasons can be genuinely considered as naturalistic facts of a non-mysterious special kind, apart from brute naturalistic facts. He even compared the contribution to scientific advancement his naturalistic account, which expands the ontology of the natural world to include psychological moral facts, with that of the natural sciences, such as physics. Reflecting on his naturalistic psychological moral system, he recommended: "And this discovery in morals, *like that in physics* is to be regarded as a considerable advancement of the speculative sciences."[80]

The Humean distinction between two distinct kinds of facts that I have identified provides a background to understanding Hume's position regarding "facts-value" and "Is-Ought" distinction. In his remarks, he repudiated the view of moral realists that grounds value judgments in experience-independent facts. By so doing, he called attention to the specific class of facts that he thought plausibly ground moral judgments. We need to pay attention to recognize the view that, in the discussions preceding and also following his fact-value and is-ought remarks, Hume was demonstrating how the idea of moral values originate from facts about sentient creatures, but not from brute facts about inanimate objects. In the two paragraphs preceding his fact-value remarks, he explained why we cannot form moral ideas about "parricide or ingratitude", for example, from brute

facts about inanimate objects, such as the oak tree. He picked up the same argument in the section "*Moral distinctions are derived from a moral sense*" (Bk. III. Pt. I. Sect. II) which immediately follows his is-ought remark. Consider his remark that emphasizes what he thought he had earlier defended: "I have objected to the system, which establishes eternal moral measures of right and wrong, that 'tis impossible to shew, in the actions of reasonable creatures, any relations, which are not found in *external objects*; and therefore, if morality always intended these relations, 'twere possible for *inanimate matter* to become virtuous or vicious."[81] We notice that the discussion preceding and following his facts-value remarks both consistently involve an argument that we do not induce moral ideas from mind-independent brute physical facts.

In my view, it would seem a very mysterious intellectual lapse on the part of Hume to place a remark in the middle of two unrelated arguments. We need a closer attention to capture the view that the passages preceding, as well as the one following, his fact-value remarks are both about the argument that moral ideas, such as vice and virtue, originate from facts relating to the psychological experiences of sentient beings, not from mind-independent brute facts about inanimate objects.[82] By highlighting the simple (but an important) view that morality is not an inquiry about inanimate objects, Hume was of the considered view that, to successfully discourse, explain, and formulate plausible moral judgments and general principles of morality, it is imperative to first understand the nature of the moral beings, including their psychological dispositions, both from and for which such principle is designed. Without this, we may only speculate about "hypothetical beings." As Iris Murdoch contends, "Moral philosophy is the examination of the most important of all human activities.... The examination should be realistic. Human nature, as opposed to the natures of other hypothetical spiritual beings, has certain discoverable attributes, and these should be suitably considered in any discussion of morality."[83] Murdoch's statement is supported by Hume's naturalistic view of moral inquiries. In Hume's naturalistic ethical system, the extent to which an action is morally right or wrong is indispensably determined by facts relating to the actual experiences of moral subjects. We cannot transcend the experiences of moral subjects to conceptualize any idea of right and wrong. This is the point in his remark that value and ought statements cannot be plausibly inferred from facts external to human experiences. The facts he denied in his moral system are experience-independent brute facts. But since morality is for sentient beings, he argued that it not only can, but ought actually to, be premised on experiential facts about human natural conditions and experiences.

In conclusion, let me emphasize that, in his fact-value remarks, Hume's concern regarding the inferential relation between value or normative conclusions and factual premises involved a consideration whether moral reasoning is based on a pure logical deduction, not

loosely about whether facts have a role to play in moral judgment. Strictly speaking, it is true that Hume saw a *logical gap* between value judgments and nonmoral facts. He was "surpriz'd to find that instead of the usual copulations of propositions, *is*, and *is not*,...[he met with] no proposition that is not connected with an *ought*, and an *ought not*" (T. 469). On the relation between *is* and *ought* propositions, Hume was puzzled "how this new relation [i.e., value conclusion] can be a deduction from others [i.e., factual premises], which are entirely different from it" (*ibid.*). On this, the orthodox view correctly captures the idea that Hume saw a logical gap between value judgments and factual propositions. But it is misleading to attribute to Hume the view that value judgments require no reference to "facts". Hume saw fact-value relation as an *explanatory problem,* not a logical problem. In the argument, he urged the relation between value judgments and "factual" claims to be explained differently other than a logical connection. He argued that, "as this ought, or ought not, expresses some new relation or affirmation, 'tis necessary that it shou'd be observ'd and explain'd; and at the same time that a reason should be given, for what seems altogether inconceivable, how this new relation can be a deduction from others, which are entirely different from it" (T. 469).

The alternative explanation (contrasted with the logical argument) that Hume defended corresponds to his positive position on his fact-value-remarks, according to which moral judgments require a scientific study of moral facts about human nature (our mental states or moral sentiments). As some Humean sympathizers, notably William Frankena (1939) and John Searle (1964), have responded, whereas critics read the relation strictly as a logical deduction, Hume attempted to deny this.[84] As an experiential discourse, he considered the inference as probabilistic inductive reasoning. Certainly, he saw it as impossible to induce value or ethical judgments from factual premises by a *strict logical deduction*. On this, his underlying point was that factual matters are empirical issues which predictions and conclusions obtained from them can only be obtained by an inductive empirical strategy. This is how science proceeds. The defining molecules of water, H_20, are related to the substance "water" experientially; they are testable empirically. Descriptive facts about human nature can also relate to value or ethical judgments experientially, not by a pure logical justification. For example, the judgment that arbitrarily killing is wrong can be empirically confirmed by experientially observing its detrimental impact (destruction of life) on human beings.

Chapter 7

INTERSUBJECTIVE MORAL REALITY: A HUMEAN ACCOUNT

INTRODUCTION

Hume's naturalism about morality, as we have noted, defends continuity between morality and science. His moral theory maintains that we can study the mind to understand the psychological principles that causally determine and thus explain human behavior in much the same way that the sciences causally explain the behaviour of natural events. In chapter six, I identified his theory as subjective naturalism. But objectivity is a cardinal virtue of science.[1] How could Hume be a subjective naturalist and at the same time not deny the idea of objective reality of moral values? I have argued in many ways for the view that Hume's naturalistic moral theory does not deny the objective reality of moral values, despite its subjectivist foundation. My argument was that Hume's theory rejects rationalistic realists' conception of objectivity as mind-independent, and instead conceives of objective reality as mind-dependent. This chapter clarifies and defends the view that mind-dependent objective reality, on my Humean account, is grounded in an intersubjective intentionality; moral reality is not determined by individual mental states.[2] By conceiving objective moral reality as mind-dependent, Hume implied the view that morality is a social institution that conventionally emerges from intersubjective or communal agreement. On this view, mind-dependent objective moral reality is an intersubjective institution that is secured by "communal psychology" (or as it may be called "collective agreement"). We shall see that the view that morality is an intersubjective social institution is implied by Hume's identification of the moral point of view with the general point of view. Also, we shall see that the view that the intersubjective moral institution evolves from communal or intersubjective agreement is supported by Hume's convention theory of collective agreement.[3]

The discussion is arranged in the following order: The first two sections are Humean defense of morality as an "intersubjective" social institution. The third section conceives of intersubjective moral reality as a social institution that emerges conventionally from collective (communal) agreements. The fourth section provides a response to "knavish" challenge to collective agreement and general rules, especially rules of justice that require consistent

obedience to general rules and agreements. The fifth section discusses Hume's view of communal enforcement of regularity of cooperative moral behavior for common security and interests. The final section responds to two general challenges to the Humean convention theory of collective agreement.

7.1. THE SOCIAL FRAMEWORK OF HUME'S MORAL THOUGHT

A prominent feature of Hume's moral thought involves the idea that morality is a social institution that exists in the "intersubjective" public world; judgements about moral qualities (moral goodness) are not reducible to the belief states of an individual thinker. To fully appreciate the "intersubjective" foundation of Hume's moral thought, we require a deeper understanding of the social character of his moral system. I will compare the Humean social view of the person with Cartesian atomistic view of the individual.

The social framework of Hume's moral thought is revealed by his conception of a person as a sociable creature. As he put it, "Man is a social, no less than reasonable being" (E. 8). A person is by nature a self-conscious sensible or as Hume called it in the passage, "reasonable" creature. But a person is also by nature other things as well--she also has a sociable attribute. (We shall see shortly how the sociable and the rational attributes fit consistently together.) We noted in chapter two Hume's conception of human beings as part of the organic order of nature, including the social order. Hume conceived sociability as a natural attribute of a person; a person is biologically born as a social creature. The individual naturally lives and flourishes in society. A fundamental point involved in the conception of a person as social animal is that the individual person is not "self-sufficient" alone, independent of the social space that he inhabits. This view is supported by Aristotle's influential formulation of the natural concomitant of sociability to human nature. On the Aristotelian account, a person "is a social animal, indeed a political animal, *because he is not self-sufficient alone, and in an important sense is not self-sufficient outside a polis.*"[4] This idea contrasts with Platonic radical atomistic view that was carried over into the modern Cartesian philosophical system that conceived of a person as a self-sufficient thinking subject. In the Cartesian philosophical thought, a person is purely a "disengaged" ("egocentric") isolated thinking subject that exists independent of anything else in the material world in which she lives.[5] The Cartesian system understands what it is to be a person exclusively from an "*I Think*" perspective.[6] A person is purely an "I" individual that realizes himself purely through his solitary thinking activities.[7]

Hume described a person and her values from the social perspective to revolutionize the Cartesian view. In contrast with the *I think* perspective from which the Cartesian conceives of a

person, Nicholas Capaldi argues persuasively that Hume construed a person from "*We think* and *We do* perspectives."[8] Capaldi' describes this shift from the Cartesian atomistic view to social conception of the person as "Hume's Copernican Revolution in moral philosophy." This refers to the view that Hume rejected Cartesian atomistic conception of a person from *I think* and *I Do* perspectives and, in replacing it, conceived of the individual from *We Think* and *We Do* perspectives.[9] Capaldi identifies the Cartesian atomistic view as follows:

> The Classical perspective, carried over into modern philosophy by Descartes, is the *I think* perspective, i.e. the perspective of the egocentric, outside, disengaged observer. From the point of view of this perspective, human beings are conceived of as isolated thinking subjects in contrast with a world of objects.[10]

Capaldi presents a diagram to illustrate the view that the individual in the Cartesian psychological system lives and conducts her activities by reasoning mainly from *I Think* perspective to *I Do* ways of life.[11] By contrast, Hume ventured to circumvent and revolutionize the Cartesian solipsistic psychology "by adopting the *We Do* perspective."[12] The problem that Hume saw in the *I Think-I Do* perspective of describing the individual involves the difficulty it poses to explaining the causal relation between thought or mental states and action or physical activities. Hume saw this as the problem that led the British rationalists to conceive a conflict between reason and passion. As Capaldi writes: "The alleged conflict between reason and passion within rationalistic British moral philosophies is a reflection of this problem," that is, the Cartesian "inability to explain the relation between thought and action, between mind and body."[13] Hume attempted "to circumvent these problems by adopting the *We do* perspective."[14] In placing the person in the natural and social order, he rejected rationalistic conception of the person solely from the *I think* perspective. "Hume viewed human beings fundamentally as agents, as doers, immersed in both a physical world and a social world along with other agents."[15] In developing his social theory, Hume believed that a person has both "rational" and social composite attributes; a person is both a rational and social animal. Hume wrote:

> Man is a reasonable being; and as such, receives from science his proper food and nourishment. But so narrow are the bounds of human understanding, that little satisfaction can be hoped for in this particular, either from the extent or security of his acquisitions. Man is a social, no less than reasonable being…Man is also an active being…It seems, then, that nature has pointed out a mixed kind of life as most suitable to the human race…Indulge your passion for science, says she, but let your science be human, and such as may have a direct reference to action and society…Be a philosopher; but, amidst all your philosophy, be still a man" (E. 8-9).

In his social theory, Hume "socialized reason," so to speak, by calling to attention the idea that self-knowledge through introspective thinking alone, independent of the social space in which a person lives and conducts her affairs, cannot provide the individual with the values she requires

for self-sufficiency or self-fulfillment. Hume's unrelenting attack on rationalism repudiated the *I Think* mode of describing a person, but not a rejection of reason *per se,* as we noted in chapter three. In his criticism of rationalistic moral system, what Hume persistently attempted to call attention to was his belief in the "inability of reason alone to make sense of itself when viewed from the *I Think* perspective."[16] Hume reversed rationalists' procedure of scrutinizing the mind to discover principles of rationality that direct and control our actions and passions.[17] By so doing, he believed that the psychological principles that causally determine our actions could be discovered in practices and actions in society.

Hume neither believed nor subscribed to the Cartesian atomism that conceives of the self as an independently existing isolated simple entity. He was explicit on his departure from the Cartesian solipsistic view. "There are some philosophers, who imagine we are every moment conscious of what we call our SELF; that we...are certain, beyond the evidence of a demonstration, that both of its perfect identity and simplicity...." Hume continued, "unluckily all these positive assertions are contrary to that very experience, which is pleaded for them, nor have we any idea of *self*, after the manner it is here explain'd...(T. 251-52). Hume emphasized the argument in a paper that he attached to the *Treatise* as an "Appendix": "... we have no impression of self or substance, as something simple and individual. We have, therefore, no idea of them in that sense" (T. 633).[18] Instead of the Cartesian atomistic view, Hume construed the self (the individuality of a person) as a set of successively related experiences. In his "relational theory" of the identity of a person, he argued that the concept of the "self or person is not any one impression, but that to which our several impressions and ideas are suppos'd to have a reference" (T. 251). This is to say that the self is "a distinct idea of several different objects existing in succession, and connected together by close relation, and to an accurate view affords as perfect a notion of diversity..." (T. 253). Hume believed that the self individuates itself as a person through the history of its successive actions and experiences. As we read from Book II of the *Treatise* that he titled, "Of the Passions," the self is "that individual person, of whose actions and sentiments each of us is ultimately conscious" (T. 286).[19]

Hume's description of the self in reference to actions and sentiments highlights his belief in the importance of the body as part of the defining features of the self.[20] Thus, contrary to the Cartesian thought, Hume construed the self or person as not a simple disembodied spiritual substance. The self is not ontologically made up of, and epistemically knowable by, its thoughts or consciousness alone.[21] Self-awareness (knowledge of oneself) is not introspective, on Hume's thought. Rather it is socially dependent. He believed that, the "understanding, when it acts alone, and according to its most general principles, entirely subverts itself." (T. 267). The mind or

understanding is, for Hume, an organic, social, and historical activity. Organic activities, unlike mechanisms, grow and exist in a state of exchange with their environment. That is why it is only through action, not thought alone, that [on Hume's view] we discover who we are and add to what we are."[22] A person forms a better and deeper understanding of herself when she compares her activities and values to those of others within her social community. In Hume words, "we fancy ourselves more happy, as well as more virtuous and beautiful, when we appear so to others" (T. 292). In other words, we understand ourselves better by comparing and evaluating ourselves in terms of the values acceptable to other members of our social community.[23]

In his confined isolated condition, Hume believed that the solitary individual cannot critically evaluate himself and his values. Self-evaluations and self-criticisms are possible only if we have independent standards or values, besides those of our own, to which we can compare our values and standards; evaluations and assessments require objective standards, not just personal idiosyncratic opinions. The isolated individual can have no independent values by which she can learn, and to which she can compare and expand, her own narrow values. Without any independent values as a guide, the solitary individual has no means of knowing that her particular cherished values and lifestyle are morally worthwhile. The foregoing highlights the view that, unlike Cartesian atomistic philosophical system, Hume did not endorse solipsism; he conceived of a person as a social entity. He regarded solipsism as a solitude confinement recommendable only for criminals. He wrote: "A perfect solitude is, perhaps the greatest punishment we can suffer. Every pleasure languishes when enjoy'd a-part from company, and every pain becomes more cruel and intolerable" (T 363). By contrast to the Cartesian atomistic conception of the individual, Hume conceived the self in relational terms as a sociable entity. He believed that it is only in the social context and relations with others that a person can develop and improve himself. So, on his view, sociability is indispensable to human nature.

We noted in chapter four Hume's belief that the development of a calm virtuous moral disposition or character involves reflective evaluative assessment and correction of the manifestations of our original human nature. In developing his social theory, he consistently argued that society provides the context by which we correct, reform, and augment our natural limitations.

> 'Tis by society alone he [a person] is able to supply his defects, and raise himself up to an equality with his fellow-creatures, and even acquire a superiority above them. By society all his infirmities are compensated; and tho' in that situation his wants multiply every moment upon him, yet his abilities are still more augmented, and leave him in every respect more satisfied and happy, than 'tis possible for him, in his savage and solitary condition, ever become. (T. 485)

Sociability helps us to form and correct our ideas of moral values and what we consider as pleasurable. A person forms a better and deeper understanding of the virtuous character worth desiring and pursuing by comparing her desires and values to the values of her social community. This is why Hume believed that we conceive and affirm ourselves as virtuous and beautiful when it is so approved of by others in our social community, such as our friends and love ones (T. 292). Sociability, such as relations of friendship and companionship, on the Humean thought, is an integral part of the essential moral and social values of human beings. Hume even sometimes suggested the view that sociability is concomitant to a happy living. He conceived of a happy life as better enjoyable in company or society than in solitary life. According to his view, "Every pleasure languishes when enjoy'd a-part from company, and every pain becomes more cruel and intolerable" (T 363). For example, we obtain a psychological relief by sharing our experiences (painful or exciting) together.

7.2. THE INTERSUBJECTIVE MORAL POINT OF VIEW

I now turn to defend the view that Hume conceived of moral values as intersubjective social values. I defend the argument in the context of his identification of the moral point of view with the general point of view (GPV). The *We Think* and *We Do* sociable perspectives that Hume defended to replace the *I Think* and *I Do* atomistic psychology is supported by his identification of the moral point of view to consist in the "general point of view." Hume wrote:

> [W]hen we consider, that every particular person's pleasure and interest being different, 'tis impossible men cou'd ever agree in their sentiments and judgments, unless they chose some common point of view, from which they might survey their object, and which might cause it to appear the same to all of them" (T. 591).

The social or *We* perspective must be the vantage point from which moral matters ought to be assessed and judged. Hume identified the moral point of view with the general beliefs and values of the social community; the moral point of view is the communal beliefs and values. The moral point of view consists in the point of view common to oneself as well as to others. As Hume put it, one adopts the moral point of view by "choosing a point of view, common to himself with others" (E. 272). On moral matters, we need to break out beyond our solipsistic precincts and adopt generally agreeable standards for our judgments of moral and social matters. By identifying the moral point of view with the general point of view, Hume conceived of moral values as *intersubjective values*. His theory urges judgments about moral goodness (moral values) and virtues (the characters of other people) to be consistent with social values and conventions. Society is grounded in common bonds and solidarity largely because we cherish and share

common values. Moral judgments must therefore be the point of view that is generally shared by members of the social-moral community.

The account further suggests the view that moral concepts have *intersubjective meanings*. Since a person speaks a social language, our moral concepts must be social in nature; moral languages must have social meanings. Our moral concepts or languages are not private institutions that we can restrict to our personal way of viewing and valuing things. As citizens of a social-moral community, we must have common understanding of the meanings of moral terms and languages. Our moral concepts and languages can be meaningful only in terms of how other human beings in our social community understand and approve of them. Morality, as Hume conceived it, is an intersubjective social institution. Moral language and ideas are meaningful only in society. The idea of private morality is moot. Communication and intercourse with others cannot be possible, if each of us considers social-moral matters from his or her own opinion. Social discourse (interaction, friendship, etc.) cannot be possible if we cannot fix and share a common point of view about social and moral matters. In communication and other social discourses, we fix a common point of view to remedy tensions that could be created by each person judging moral and social issues from, and insisting upon, his own opinion. In Hume's words,

> [E]very particular man has a peculiar position with regards to others; and 'its impossible we cou'd ever converse together on any reasonable terms, were each of us to consider characters and persons, only as they appear from his peculiar point of view. In order, therefore, to prevent those continual *contradictions*, and arrive at a more *stable* judgment of things, we fix on some *steady* and *general* points of view; and always, in thoughts, place ourselves in them, whatever may be our present situations (T 581-82).

We have noted from the foregoing discussion that Hume identified the moral point of view with the general or the intersubjective point of view. The account highlights the Humean view that the intersubjective or communal point of view is the vantage point of assessment and determination of morally acceptable or desirable projects. The individual's conception of the moral good must be consistent with the intersubjective values of the social community. The moral point of view involves general or communal beliefs about moral goodness or values that members of a social community share together. The social community exists on, and is bounded together by, common or communal values, conventions, and beliefs. The account suggests that, in the Humean moral system, moral judgments and decisions need not be determined by the narrow and unilateral interests and beliefs of individual moral agents. The argument further suggests the view that moral values and truths exist in the common reference world. Moral truths involve beliefs about the rightness of an action or the virtuousness of a moral character that members of a community

share. The *We* must be the vantage-point of the individuals' judgment (or assessment) of the moral good or moral values. The project that is generally approvable by, or consistent to, the values and conventions of the social community is the morally acceptable project. The values and conventions of the social community must be the standards for the determination and assessment of the morally worthiness of our desirable goods. Not every most heartfelt project is morally acceptable and worth of pursuing. The general standards set by the values and conventions of our social community provide an intersubjective standard for assessing and critically evaluating our desirable projects. Since we conduct ourselves in society, our activities always have impacts on others. As Hume put it, there is not "any one whose conduct or character is not by their means, an object to every one of censure or approbation"(E. 273). Our membership of a social community imposes a regulatory check on our judgments of what is right and wrong. We glean the argument from the following passage from Hume.

> [W]hen a man condemns a character as vicious, he expresses sentiments, in which he expects all his audience are to concur with him. He must here, therefore, depart from his private and particular situation, and must choose a point of view, common to him with others; and he must move a universal principle of the human frame, and touch a string to which all mankind have in accord and symphony" (E 272).

The intersubjective foundation of the Humean moral system suggests that, as a member of a social community, my belief and judgment of what is right is a microcosm of what *We* (our society or community) believe and judge as right. I judge x as morally right only as part of *our* judgment that x is right. I behave morally and conduct my activities in the moral way because *our* society exists and thrives on the expectation of cooperative moral behaviour. Community membership and cooperative peaceful living require of acting on mutual welfare, as opposed to acting on unilateral interests. When our personal interests conflict with the "We" or communal values, the "We" interests must be prioritized or given a primary consideration.

I want to clearly explain the nature of the concept of intersubjective reality with which I am identifying the Humean theory of the moral point of view. My Humean account agrees with moral and social theories that ground collective activities in "We-consciousness." This Humean view of intersubjectivity is implied by Hume's identification of the moral point of view with the GPV. This concept of intersubjectivity prioritizes, so to speak, the "We" over the individual in judgments of social-moral values; the *We* takes precedence over the *I Think* perspective of assessing moral matters. The intersubjective perspective of moral reasoning also sees the social community as founded in a common bond, solidarity, interests, and mutual responses. Fundamentally, cooperative moral and social behaviors are grounded in communal values. The Humean theory of intersubjective meaning of moral values is in a way consistent with the theory

of collective intentionality that is currently advocated by Charles Taylor (1995) and John Searle (1995). As we shall see in the last section of the discussion, they differ only in their respective accounts of the process by which we obtain the intersubjective or collective (the "We") intentionality or values. The particular feature that they all share in common involves the fact that they all ground social reality or values in "We" or collective intentionality. On this view, we are aware of the social world and the meaning of social and moral values from the "We" or the intersubjective perspective. This intersubjective account of social reality, as I highlighted from the Humean perspective, rates the "We" over individuals' subjective judgments about social matters. This is a fundamental feature of the theory of collective intentionality. As Taylor, in defense of a similar theory, nicely puts it, "we are aware of the world through a 'we' before we are through the 'I'. Hence we need the distinction between what is just shared in the sense that each of us has it in our individual worlds, and that which is in the common world."[24] Intersubjective values exist in the common reference world to which individual beliefs and judgments about social and moral values must correspond. It is in the common reference world that the common bond and collective solidarity is grounded. Intersubjective values are not something that individuals happen to share merely by accidental synchronization of their beliefs and interests. Intersubjective values bind members of a social community together in a strong web of solidarity. As Hume argued, "When this sense of common sense of interest is mutually express'd and is known to both, it produces a suitable resolution and behavior…[T]he actions of each of us have a reference to those of the other, and are perform'd upon the supposition, that something is to be perform'd on the other part" (T. 490).

The intersubjective meaning of moral values is grounded in the conscious effort to unite in common bond and solidarity to mutually pursue common interests. As Taylor nicely articulated it, "There must be a powerful net of intersubjective meanings for there to be common meanings; and the result of powerful common meanings is the development of a greater web of intersubjective meanings as people live in community."[25] Taylor is right about the view that intersubjectivity is a description of "We" collective intentionality. As Searle also illustrates it, collective intentionality involves cases when "*I* am doing something only as part of *our* doing something."[26] For example, "If am an offensive lineman playing in a football game, I might be blocking the defense end, but I am blocking only as part of *our* executing a pass play."[27] Similarly, "If I am a violinist in an orchestra I play *my* part in *our* performance of the symphony."[28] The illustrations highlight the view that any group (social) practices, like a game, that strive for a common goal require responsive cooperation on the part of the individual players. This idea is supported by the Humean theory of intersubjectivity that urges our individual

judgments of the moral good to be determined from the general point of view. As we shall see from Hume shortly, when we agree conventionally to live by general rules to enforce regularity of cooperative behavior, we do so with the common understanding to do our part as a joint effort on *our* part to promote common interests.

Now, it may be asked: on the Humean account, what motivates us to move from the evaluation of moral issues from our personal perspectives to adopt the intersubjective moral point of view? Addressing a similar question, Jean Hampton rejects Hume's theory of the common point of view as empty of motivational content. The motivational problem that Hampton raises is a concern about "what motivates us to make corrected impartial judgments from the general point of view, rather than partial judgments from uncorrected sentiments?"[29] She is puzzled about how we can explain why someone would be motivated strongly enough to evaluate another, using the impartial judgment. On her view, the only explanation that Hume suggested was the view that we mutually adopt the general point of view to avoid contradictions in our folk or conventional moral language and judgments. But on Hampton's view, Hume's suggestion involves correction in our moral language and judgments but this leaves our partial sentiments uncorrected. That is, in principle, we adopt the general point of view (henceforth GPV) to speak common moral language and express common judgments about moral matters, but in practice, we live and act according to the motivations of our partial sentiments. This implies the view that, in adopting the general point of view, we still evaluate the actions and characters of others from a partial sentiment. A person may be aware of the importance of judging others from the GPV (for example, by using a moral language that can be used consistently by all of us). Yet he may "be more strongly motivated (indeed find it inescapable) to 'see' the person in the way directed by the partial, uncorrected sentiment," according to Hampton's objection.[30]

Contrary to Hampton's criticism, Hume believed that we are actually (for example, through social sanctions such as rewards and punishments) motivated to move beyond our personal interests to adopt the intersubjective point of view as an objective standard for our moral judgments. We are able to do this because we share common human nature. In Hume's words, "the notion of morals implies some sentiment common to all mankind, which recommends the same object to general approbation, and makes every man, or most men agree in the same opinion or decision concerning it" (E 272). We share certain biologically wired or interconnected sentiments that serve as a communication link between and among us. (We shall see shortly whether this account contradicts my rejection in chapter four the view that moral sentiments are not biologically given dispositions.) The ability to judge from the intersubjective moral point of view derives from certain communicative sentiment (sympathetic contagion) that we share. We

belong to the same high-level biological animal species. We therefore share common sentiments. According to Hume's argument, "the minds of men are mirrors to one another" (T. 365). He explained:

> The minds of all men are similar in their feelings and operations, nor can any one be actuated by any affection, of which all others are not, in some degree, susceptible. As, in strings equally wounded up, the motion of one communicates itself to the rest; so all the affections readily pass from one person to another, and beget correspondent movements in every human creature (T. 576).

In circumstances when we are positioned to make value judgments, our sentiments may be activated by our sympathy in response to the effects of a perceived or contemplated character. Since we share common human nature, we have similarly structured sensory organs to sympathize with victims of vicious characters. We do share the experience (pain and pleasure) of each other. This is because our sensory organs are normally in dispositional states to be stimulated when we perceive, contemplate, or are in contact with a person who is manifesting painful experiences analogous to the way we do when we are actually in a similar painful experience. We express sympathy and condemn the vicious character of a person because we sense and share the feeling of its painful impacts. As Hume illustrated the view, "when I see the effects of passion in the voice and gesture of any person, my mind immediately passes from these effects to their causes, and forms such a lively idea of the passion as is presently converted into the passion itself" (T. 576). In other words, the minds of moral beings are interconnected and wired by emotive communication. We share common sentiments about morality by sympathetic or emotional contagion.

Robert Gordon may reject my Humean argument that the experiential relation between our sentiment and objects of our moral assessment is, according to Hume's moral system, a sympathetic contagion. Gordon argues that sympathetic identification with others by which we form moral impressions about virtuous and vicious character is *inferential* but not by an emotional contagion. He takes Hume as claiming the view that, in sympathetic responses to the discomforts of others, "first we move inferentially from the effects of an emotion to the idea of the emotion that caused them; then, somehow, the same emotion gets synthesized in us."[31] Gordon then criticizes Hume for not capturing the idea that sympathetic responses are emotional contagion. Commenting on Hume's remark about how "the ideas of the affections of others are converted into the very impressions they represent," Gordon argues: "But his account seems implausible. It makes cognition and inference essential links in the communication of emotion, and it requires a mechanism for subsequently converting ideas back into emotions."[32] Illustrating the problem, he explains, "one problem is that the hypothesized dependence on cognition and

inference would make it hard to explain the well-known fact that even infants pick up the emotions of others by contagion."[33] I think Gordon is wrong in his interpretation as by inferential means, the causal process by which Hume thought sympathetic emotion gets "synthesized" in us impressions of vice and virtue. His criticism is grounded in a misrepresentation of Hume. It would be strange for Hume to construe emotional responses as inferential and yet deny even the idea that our causal beliefs are inferential. Hume was rather committed to the opposite of what Gordon attributes to him. Hume conceived of sympathetic responses as by means of emotional contagion. Notice the following remarks by Hume that directly contradicts Gordon's account.

> The human mind is of a very imitative nature; nor is it possible for any set of men to converse often together, without acquiring a similitude of manners, and communicating to each other their vices as well as their virtues. The propensity to company and society is strong in all rational creatures; and the same disposition, which gives us this propensity, makes us enter deeply into each other's sentiments, and causes like passions and inclinations, to run, as it were, by *contagion* through the whole club or knot of companions.[34]

Now, an important clarification must be noted about the connection that I have drawn between Humean intersubjective theory of moral reality and our biologically preprogrammed sympathetic communicative sentiments. I have argued for the view that we owe our capacity (ability) for "We" or intersubjective intentionality to our biologically given communicative sentiments. But I do not imply the view that the capacity for intersubjective intentionality is *by itself* a biologically given ability. My claim is that the capacity for intersubjective judgments *derives from,* but is *not the same as*, our biological sentiments. The argument is supported by my defense in chapter four the view that in the Humean naturalistic moral system, our moral sentiments or dispositions are developed out of our biologically given abilities. Recall Hume's view that we develop reflective moral sentiments causally from the ideas and impressions we acquire when we think about the possible effects of our immediate sensations, such as the impressions of pleasure and pain. Without the primary biological passions, the secondary (reflective) or moral sentiments could have no causal foundation. Sympathetic responses are physiological sentiments that we owe to our biological human nature. They are the motivating forces that determine us into action. But on the Humean view, the sentiments by themselves lack intentional contents to guide our attention towards moral directions. We therefore need to train our reflective capacities to help us adopt the general or intersubjective moral point of view. But there can be no such things as reflective passions in the absence of the primary or biological sentiments. We develop the reflective passions from the original or biological ones. So, the actual ability or sentiment that enables us to adopt and judge from the intersubjective moral point of view causally supervenes (depends) on the primary or biological passions. This Humean account is similar to Searle's account of

collective intentionality that grounds our abilities for cooperative behavior in our background biological capacities.

Searle argues in his *The Construction of Social Reality* that social reality evolves from human constructive capacities. He believes that human species "have a capacity for collective intentionality" that explains their collective cooperative behavior.[35] He then attributes our capacity for collective intentionality to innate "Background" biological abilities. According to his argument, "Intentional states function only given a set of Background capacities that *do not themselves consist in intentional phenomena*..."[36] As Searle maintains in the passage, the background capacities themselves are not intentional states.[37] They are only potential biological abilities from which we acquire intentional capacities for collective agreement. Searle argues: "I have thus defined the concept of the 'Background' as the set of *nonintentional or preintentional capacities that enable intentional states to function*..."[38] Searle's account suggests the view that our abilities for social cooperative living causally depends on our biological capacities. We acquire capacities for collective intentionality based on certain background biologically given potential abilities.

Searle's argument is, in a way, in line with the Humean argument according to which, moral dispositions or sentiments are causally developed out of (but not the same as) our originally or biologically given human nature. My Humean account, however, differs from Searle's in the process by which the collective intentionality is fully actualized. This can be seen in Searle's objection to grounding collective or We-intentionality in "I intend" expressions. I will argue that his account fails to recognize two levels (stages) of the process by which collective intentionality is fully realized (actualized). I shall argue that, though the potential capacity for collective intentionality supervenes on our biological human nature, collective intentionality (agreement) is established artificially by self-awareness of the rationality of cooperative behavior over the net cost that the individuals would pay for by living otherwise. The interesting issue is the question about the bond that actually ties the general point of view into a common moral point of view. The causal power or the bond is, in Hume's moral system, a "conventional collective agreement." Morality is, on the Humean account, a cooperative social institution that emerges conventionally from collective agreement. We shall see that, in Hume's account, though the adoption of the moral point of view is possible because of our shared human nature, the adoption of the GPV is required to be ratified by collective agreement to mutually adopt general rules to enforce its practice. I turn in the next section to argue for the view that on the Humean model, actual intentional capacity for adopting the GPV emerges constructively from conventional collective agreement.

7.3.1. HUME'S CONVENTION THEORY OF COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT

This section defends the view that the moral reality or values that we construct and place onto the world is by conventional collective agreement; moral reality is not projected onto the world by intentions and interests of a particular individual mind. Since moral values are intersubjective social values, they are mind-dependent values that are created by intersubjective or communal agreement. I will often refer to the agreement as collective intentionality, since it is grounded in communal psychology.

Given his identification of the moral point of view with the intersubjective point of view, it is not surprising to see that Hume conceived general moral laws as emerging constructively from communal practices rather than the private consciousness of individual moral agents. Moral rules and reality exist out there constructively not by projections from individual minds but by communal intentionality. On the Humean model of collective agreement, intersubjective agreement involving shared values and mutual adoption of general rules evolves constructively by conventional process. The moral community is a communal society with shared values and common bond. In large part, moral institutions, as Hume saw them, originate from the sensible realization by members of a community that their well-being and security can be maximized by a joint or cooperative venture and effort to live cooperatively by general rules. Moral institutions evolve from the sensible (rational) realization by members of a community that they can live and function happily and securely by mutually adopting general rules to regulate their actions to enforce cooperative moral behaviour. Hume accounted for the constructivity of general moral rules in terms of social convention and agreement. Adopting collective agreement to live by general rules of convention is, on Hume's thought, the best way of securing peace and stability in society to provide a congenial environment for the safer conduct and enjoyment of our individual business, properties and other rights. Consider Hume's argument in the following passage.

> ...when men, from their early education in society, have become *sensible* of the infinite advantages that result from it, and have besides acquir'd a new affection to company and conversation; and when they have observ'd, that the principal disturbance in society arises from those goods, which we call external, and from their looseness and easy transition from one person to another; they must seek for a remedy, by putting these goods, as far as possible, on the same footing with the fix'd and constant advantages of the mind and body. This can be done after no other manner than by a convention enter'd into by all the members of the society to bestow stability on the possession of those external goods, and leave every one in the peaceable enjoyment of what he may acquire by his fortune and industry. By this means, every one knows what he may safely possess; *and the passions are restrain'd in their partial and contradictory motions* (T. 489, my emphases).[19]

Hume described collective agreement as convention because he conceived the process as evolving gradually by the means of invisible or tacit agreement, not by the means of a promissory contract. His theory is not a contractual model of collective agreement. As he illustrated it, "Two men, who pull the oars of a boat, do it by an agreement or convention, tho' they have never given promises to each other" (T. 490). The Humean model of collective agreement differs, for example, from the contractarian theories that we read from Hobbes, Locke, and Rawls.[40] Whereas contractarian theories of social agreement are grounded in bargaining and promises among parties to a contract, the Humean model of collective agreement is grounded in coordinated procedure call "salience." As David Gauthier defines it, on the "salience" device, "Hume conceives the problem of selecting among rules as one of coordination, rather than bargaining."[41] Hume saw "bargaining, the typical contractarian device, [as] a relatively costly procedure for reaching agreement, suitable only when our differential preferences among possible conventions are strong in comparison with our interests in the selection of some convention rather than none."[42]

On Hume's understanding, a contract is binding if sealed by a promise. But as he points out, promises are valid and meaningful upon the prior existence of a convention that contains rules and enforcement mechanisms for regulating its practice. Distinguishing his convention model of collective agreement from the contractarian model, Hume wrote: "This convention is not of the nature of *promise*: for even promises themselves, as we shall see afterwards, arise from human conventions" (T. 490). The account in the *Enquiry* is more informative, and there, Hume referred implicitly to Hobbes and Locke's contractarian model of social agreement.

> It has been asserted by some, that justice arises from human Conventions, and proceeds from the voluntary choice, consent, or combination of mankind. If by *convention* be here meant a *promise* (which is the most common usual sense of the word) nothing can be more absurd than this position. The observance of promises is itself one of the most considerable parts of justice, and we are not surely bound to keep our word because we have given our word to keep it (E. 306).

On the Humean account, collective agreement evolves, and is established, as a regulatory social institution by a gradual process without any historically known time and process by which it was effected. As Hume put it, conventional cooperative behaviour "arises gradually, and acquires force by a slow progression, and by our repeated experience of the inconveniences of transgressing it" (T. 490). The process is comparable to the invisible evolution of other social institutions, such as language and money.[43] In the emergence of social institutions like moral rules, language, and money, no promissory contract was negotiated. As Hume illustrated the view in the *Enquiry:*

> Thus two men pull the oars of a boat by common convention for common interest, without any promise or contract: thus gold and silver are made measures of exchange;

> thus speech and words and language are fixed by human convention and agreement. Whatever is advantageous to two or more persons, if all perform their part; but what loses all advantage if only one perform, can arise from no other principle. There would otherwise be no motive for any one of them to enter into that scheme of conduct (E. 306-7).

The collective acceptance of social institutions, such as money, language, moral rules, as a common medium of communication and transaction is purely motivated by a rational choice to maximize cooperate or mutual welfare, but not by a promissory contract.

> This experience assures us still more, that a sense of interest has become common to all our fellows, and gives us a confidence of the future regularity of their conduct. And 'tis only the expectation of this, that our moderation and abstinence are founded. In like manner are languages gradually establis'd by human conventions without any promise. In like manner do gold and silver become the common measures of exchange, and are esteemed sufficient payment for what is of hundred times their value (T. 490).

Members of a social community accept to restrain themselves in common bond to live by general rules to enforce regularity of cooperative moral behavior for mutual benefits. Agreeing to live in common bond to adopt rules to enforce cooperative moral behavior is the best rational choice, given its enhancement of everyone's expected security and welfare maximization, than otherwise.

It may be observed that the Humean convention theory of collective agreement is a form of rational choice theory. The theory is grounded in the sensible realization by members of a social community of the view that the average benefits of cooperative behavior outweighs the cost for which they would pay individually by acting and living by their unilateral interests. The interests of members of a social community would be, on the average, maximally realized by cooperative behavior, but they stand to lose together by living according to their personal interests. Consider Hume's argument, which I can only quote in full.

> [T]he commerce of mankind is not confin'd to the barter of commodities, but may extend services and actions, which we may exchange to our mutual interest and advantage. Your corn is ripe today; mine will be so to-morrow. 'Tis profitable for us both, that I shou'd labour with you to-day, and that you shou'd aid me to-morrow. I have no kindness for you, and know you have as little for me. I will not, therefore, take any pains upon your account; and should I labour with you upon my own account, in expectation of a return, I know I shou'd be disappointed, and that I shou'd in vain depend upon your gratitude. Here then I leave you to labour alone: you treat me in the same manner. The seasons change; and both of us loose our harvests for want of mutual confidence and security.... Hence, I learn to do a service to another without bearing him any real kindness; because I foresee [cit.], that he will return my service, in expectation of correspondence of good offices with me or with others. And accordingly, after I have serv'd him, and he is in possession of the advantage arising from my action, he is induc'd to perform his part, as foreseeing the consequences of his refusal (T. 520-21).

Hume developed the rational choice model of conventional agreement by defending the view that the enjoyment of social advantages requires a collective agreement to mutually adopt and ratify

rules of convention to enforce and protect regularity of cooperative moral behaviour of respect for everyone's possession and property. Happy living, safe enjoyment of possession and property, and confidence in promise-keeping are all secure only upon certain convention that is mutually adopted to enforce cooperative moral behavior. Hume developed the account by calling to attention, in retrospect, the condition and state of humankind in a community without cooperative agreement and expectation of common obedience to general rules.

> Of all the animals, with which this globe is peopled, there is none towards whom nature seems, at first sight, to have exercised more cruelty than towards man, in the numberless wants and necessities, with which she has loaded him, and the slender means, which she affords to the relieving these necessities... In man alone, this unnatural conjunction of infirmity, and of necessity, may be observed in its greatest imperfection. Not only the food, which is requir'd for his sustenance, flies his search and approach, or requires his labor to be produc'd, but he is provided neither with arms, nor force, nor other natural abilities, which are in any degree answerable to so many necessities (T. 484-85).

Hume's argument insists on the view that, in our "thrownness" into existence, so to speak, nature left us in a short supply of the natural resources that individuals sufficiently require for their existence and happy living.[44] But nature was kind enough to endow us with creative (inventive) gifts (abilities) to manufacture and expand those gifts for our betterment. So, we cannot sit back, reflect upon our natural limitations and complain. We have to take responsibility for our existence and happy living. On this realization, we invent a cooperative system of arrangement to join forces and resources together to improve our abilities (which are weak when exercised unilaterally) and to increase our natural supplies (which are limited when used and enjoyed separately). Society is advantageous, and cooperative social living maximizes our mutual welfare. Hume presented an account to defend the view that cooperative social agreement, in the form of mutual joint venture, is the best way out of the natural insufficiency predicament in which nature left us.

> Tis by society alone he [a person] is able to supply his defects, and raise himself up to an equality with his fellow-creatures, and even acquire a superiority above them. By society all his infirmities are compensated; and tho' in that situation his wants multiply every moment upon him, yet his abilities are still more augmented, and leave him in every respect more satisfied and happy, than 'tis possible for him, in his savage and solitary condition, ever become" (T. 485).

Particularly, "[s]ociety provides a remedy for these *three* inconveniences. By the conjunction of forces, our power is augmented: By the partition of employments, our ability encreases: And by mutual succour we are less expos'd to fortune and accidents. 'Tis by this additional *force, ability, and security*, that society becomes advantageous (T. 485). In other words, collective effort that is conventionally ratified by collective agreement, is the most effective social instrument that enable

us to join forces together to mutually obtain the sufficient resources we require for our successful and happy living. Relative to the abundant natural resources, with which nature endowed the non-human animals, human animals are ill-endowed by nature to meet their insatiable needs. A relief out of the predicament can be obtained by a joint effort in social cooperation. The power and security that social cooperation provide us enable a person to be "in every respect more satisfied and happy, than 'tis possible for him, in his savage and solitary condition, ever to become" (T. 485). The argument is reminiscent of Hume's confidence in human's creative capacities and inventions. Despite our natural limitations, human beings can invent a mechanism to increase their abilities, power, and security to augment the limited natural resources that are required for their existence. The limitations of our individual natural abilities are improved by a joint cooperative venture.

7.3.2. THE KNAVERY DILEMMA

The discussion in this section provides a response to the challenge of the "sensible knave" to collective agreements and general rules, especially the rules of justice that require consistent obedience to rules and agreements. The theory of collective agreement faces a dilemma about the rationality of its application. In terms of expected benefits, it seems that the unfaithful who makes occasional exceptions to take advantage of situations stands to gain more than the honest person who sticks strictly to the rules of justice and collective agreements. Also, the person who makes exceptions to take advantage of opportunities, when convenient, appears smarter and wiser than the honest individual who adheres consistently to rules. The unfaithful may enjoy a free-ride by taking advantages of others' consistent commitment to general rules and collective agreements. Hampton raises and defends the free-ride problem against Humean theory of intersubjective moral agreement. She asks: "Why isn't there a free rider problem involved in maintaining the convention to judge impartially, so that even if it is collectively rational for each person to persist in using a common system of impartial judging, it is individually rational to judge partially (and individually irrational to judge impartially)?"[45] According to her argument, "since the costs of partial, unregulated judgments will be borne only if *everyone* departs from the general point of view, then even if the costs are considerable, such that you have a strong desire to avoid them, still you won't actually pay them if *you alone* depart from the system of common judgment while everyone else continues to use it."[46]

In response to Hampton, we may ask: how can the deviant be sure that all others would not think and act as he did? Hume actually acknowledged the free-ride dilemma. He recognized the view that a collective agreement could be most advantageous to a deviant who, on the survey

of special opportunities, departs from the agreement when all others stick to the rules. The deviant who is motivated by self-interest, instead of general rules, appears smarter than the faithful or just partner of a collective agreement. This is the challenge of the sensible knave that Hume raised in his discussion of the rules of justice both in the *Enquiry* and the *Treatise* (E. 282-283, T. 479f.). In the *Enquiry*, Hume introduced the problem by the following remark. "That honesty is the best policy, may be a good general rule, but is liable to many exceptions; and he, it may perhaps be thought, conducts himself with most wisdom, who observes the general rule, and takes advantage of all the exceptions" (E. 283). The problem is an issue of the rationality of allowing the rules of justice to turn one into a "sitting-duck," so to speak, when the individual can make occasional exceptions to general rules to take advantage of opportunities when it will not cost a serious harm to the collective agreement. This is what seems to make the knave the sensible and smartest individual; he seems to know when to make exceptions to take advantages of opportunities. Hume gave us a picture of the apparent smartness of the sensible knave in the following passage. "According to the imperfect way in which human affairs are conducted, a sensible knave, in particular incidents, may think that an act of iniquity of infidelity will make a considerable addition to his fortune, without causing any considerable breach in the social union and confederacy" (*ibid).* Here, the rationality of general rules, especially the rules of justice, is in question. Relative to the smartest individual who plays the game carefully by making exceptions to rules to take advantages of opportunities, the one who sticks strictly to the rules of the game loses. As Hume put it, " in the case of justice, where a man taking things in a certain light, may often seem to be a loser by his integrity" *(ibid).* It must be noted that the sensible knave respects and obeys the general rules established by the collective agreement, only that he sees it as sensible or rational to set them aside to grab advantages, when convenient. The knavery issue (like the problem of amoralism) poses a fundamental challenge to the rationality of morality, especially a moral theory that demands consistent respect for general rules and collective agreements. Though the amoralist' skepticism about why she should be moral is more radical, the sensible knave is on the same footing regarding the rationality of why he should commit himself to exceptionless general rules of morality and moral agreements.[47]

Hume's response to the problem in the *Enquiry* was brief; he even indicated that no convincing answer could be provided. Referring to the knavery dilemma, he remarked: "I must confess that, if a man think that this reasoning much requires an answer, it will be a little difficult to find any which will to him appear satisfactory and convincing" (E. 283). Hume's acknowledgment of the view that the knavery problem fundamentally challenges the rationality of general rules and agreements has passed as his inability to answer the knavery challenge.[48] I think

Hume's suggestion that no convincing solution could be provided to the problem was overstated; he misled his readers by his confession. As G. J. Postema agues, the knavery challenge to morality "is often overrated."[49] I think the criticisms are grounded in a misleading reading of Hume's argument. On the objection, Hume, in the knavery passage, defended the view that the knave who makes exceptions to rules of morality to maximize his expected utility is, in practice, the sensible or wiser person.[50]

Hume's brief reply actually provides a penetrating answer to the knavery challenge. He indicated in his brief reply the view that knavery is not sensible or rational, despite its superficial appeal. Knavery is motivated by "a very narrow conception of rationality, one defined exclusively in terms of maximizing individual expected utility."[51] Hume indicated in his brief reply that the knave has a shortsighted view of expected utility maximization. By not living consistently by general rules, the knave lives day-by-day for momentary or occasional benefits. The practice and the benefits can only last temporally since the knave would eventually be caught and his practice will go bankrupt. Defending the argument, Hume condemned knavery as motivated by "pernicious maxims," despite the profit that he might *temporarily* enjoy (E. 283). In addition to condemning its evil nature, Hume argued that, in the rational sense, the practice of knavery is self-defeating and therefore not sensible in the social-moral world. Since the cheat cannot get away with it all the time, despite the smartness of his practice, the knave will be one day betrayed by his own maxim. Consider Hume's argument. "Such a one has, besides the frequent satisfaction of seeing knaves, will all their pretended cunning and abilities, betrayed by their own maxims" (T. 283). The knave may continue his cheating practice and enjoy his profits when he is not caught. But he may not get his way all the time. When caught, his business will fold up and subsequently go bankrupt, since every sensible person will cease transacting with him. In reference to knaves, Hume argued: "while they purpose to cheat with moderation, and secrecy, a tempting incident occurs, nature is frail, and they give into the snare; whence they can never extricate themselves, without a total loss of reputation, and the forfeiture of all future trust and confidence with mankind" (*ibid*). Hume's argument should remind us of my emphasis on the close connection that he draws between character and the pursuit of a meaningful life. As I argued in chapter four, the person with a virtuous character pursues a fulfilling and lasting meaningful life. Since, knavery, as Hume reminded us in the preceding passage, is possible for only the interim, the knave does not pursue a lasting meaningful life, despite his temporal enjoyments. As we noted, on Hume's view, a worthwhile happy life consists in pursuing a life, ambition, or project that has a long-term comprehensive and virtuous utility maximization.

To deeply appreciate Hume's reply to the knave problem, a distinction has to be noted between two different kinds of expected utility maximizing decision theories, *the best action theory*, and *rational action theory*.[52] The best action theory is the standard decision theory. It accounts for the rationality of an action purely in terms of its maximizing expected utility. On this decision choice model, the process or procedure by which goals are achieved is not the criterion for determining the rationality of the action. Rather, the criterion is restricted to the *best outcome*, that is, the maximum utility that an action optimizes. This model of decision theory is purely goal-centered. But as Robert Nozick (1993) argues, a best maximum utility maximization may not be achieved by a rational process or procedure. "An action might reach goals or maximize expected utility without having been arrived at rationally;" they could be "stumbled upon by accident or done inadvertently or result from a series of miscalculations that cancel each other out."[53] We may add that the best action could be achieved non-rationally by a shortsighted motivation at the expense of long-term and broad-range higher benefits

Compare goal-centered best action theory with rational action theory that put higher premium on the process or procedure of an action's maximizing expected utility in the measure of its rationality. This model factors obedience to general rules and respect for agreements into the determination of the net weight of the expected utility of an action. Obedience to rules, despite certain appealing self-referential benefits, could itself be a self-fulfilling desire for someone with virtuous motives or character. The sensible knave who worries about exceptionless general rules and agreements lacks the virtuous character required for appreciating the virtues of honesty and faithfulness. The sensible knave is motivated to relate to general rules of collective agreements in case-by-case terms by goal-centered motives. His smartness achieves for him the best utility maximization, but not rational utility maximization. Knowing how to play the game to win, whatever the means, may appear smart or rational only in the narrow sense of the word. It is only when the rationality of an action is measured by a narrow criterion that the knave who takes advantage of the general obedience to rules of agreement to maximize his expected private interests may seem sensible and rational.

Hume's theory of instrumental rationality does not subscribe to the best action model. Rather, his instrumental theory of practical reason takes the form of a rational decision theory. As we noted in chapter three, Hume conceived of the principal function of practical reason to include advising us of effective means of maximally realizing objects of our desires. Committed to instrumental theory of utility maximization, it is tempting to reason that Hume would consider the sensible knave as the most rational individual, because he knows how and when to take advantages to maximize his interests. But this reading would be misleading. As we noted earlier,

Hume condemned the best action utility maximizing criterion or motivation of the knave as pernicious and practically self-defeating, since it is grounded in a short-sighted or narrow (momentary) definition of the good that is worth pursuing. It would be misleading to conclude that Hume sanctioned knavery aimed at maximizing one's expected utility, just because he conceived of the function of rationality instrumentally to consist in efficient utility maximization. Hume did not sanction any particular *means* (fair or foul) to maximize our expected utility. As we noted in chapter three, Hume was committed to both motivating and normative instrumental theory of rationality. Instrumental reason, in Hume's moral system, does not require of us to care only about the best outcome that maximizes the objects of our desires, whatever they may be. As I argued, in the secondary sense, Hume's instrumental theory of rationality requires of us to sensibly evaluate appealing desirable objects and projects to consider their consequences both to our long-term welfare, and also to our social community, before pursuing them. The discussion of knavery should be read as a thought-experiment exercise on the part of Hume to defend the rationality of general rules and cooperative moral behavior.

Hume's brief answer to the knavery dilemma tacitly suggests the view that the knave cannot sensibly practice his knavery in the social-moral world. The maxim of his own practice censures him from our social-moral world; by his pernicious character, he cannot fit into our way of life. The practice is possible only in the pre-moral or the primitive state in which everyone was motivationally controlled absolutely by selfish motives. It is only in the primitive pre-moral era of human development that Hume thought knavery could be consistently practiced. Hume made this response in his discussion of the knavery challenge in the *Treatise*. "I suppose a person to have lent me a sum of money, on condition that it be restor'd in a few days. *What reason or motive have I to restore the money?*" In one response, Hume maintained: "It will, perhaps, be said, that my regard to justice, and abhorrence of villainy and knavery, are sufficient reasons for me, if I have the least grain of honesty, or sense of duty and obligation." Notice Hume's conclusion: "And this answer, no doubt, is just and satisfactory to man in his civiliz'd state, and when train'd up according to a certain discipline and education. But in his rude and more natural condition, if you pleas'd to call such a condition natural, this answer wou'd be rejected as perfectly unintelligible and sophistical" (T. 480).

As I argued in chapter four, in Hume's moral system, the moral world is a transition from what he described above as the "rude" and "natural condition" of human nature. Our moral world is a "civilized communal state" in which we have been "trained up according to certain discipline and education" of moral rules. Subsequently, we should find knavery and villainy abhorrent and anathema to the survival of our social-moral community. Hence, from the foregoing, I conclude

that the knavery challenge cannot be sustained against the rationality of collective agreement and obedience to general rules. The moral world is a mutually established communal society grounded in general rules and expectation of cooperative moral behavior. Therefore, we cannot live in it without constraining our lives and practices by its rules. One cannot set aside general rules (even if occasionally) without thereby censuring himself from the communal moral world. This is why morally we censure, punish, or condemn individuals who depart from rules, conventions, and expectation of cooperative moral behaviors.

7.3.3. *THE REGULARITY OF COOPERATIVE MORAL BEHAVIOUR*

This section clarifies and highlights three salient features of the Humean convention theory of collective agreement. They include the following three conditions: (a) the rationality of *mutual adoption of general rules* to enforce regularity of cooperative moral behavior for common interests, (b) *mutual awareness* of the rational benefits of coordinated moral behavior, and (c) the rationality of *mutual performance* of agreements. I will not separate the three in the discussion.

A fundamental feature of Hume's convention theory of collective agreement involves the belief that the enforcement of regularity of cooperative moral behavior in society requires mutual agreement to live by general rules for the maximization of common interests. This idea is supported by Hume's argument that convention "is only a general sense of common interests; which sense all the members of the society express to one another, and *which induces them to regulate their conduct by certain rules*" (T. 490, emphasis added). Morality is a normative social institution that demands regularity of cooperative moral behavior. Cooperative moral behavior requires mutual agreement to live by rules, instead of our unilateral interests, for the common good. We mutually agree to live and regulate our conduct and activities by rules as an effort to enforce regularity of cooperative behavior for common benefits. The argument supports my identification of Hume's convention theory of collective agreement as a rational choice instrument for maximizing mutual welfare and security. On the balance, cooperative living according to general rules is more secure and advantageous than living according to our competing interests. Moral institutions are founded in tacit agreement by members of a social community who are aware that their interests would be rationally satisfied through coordinated behaviour according to mutual adoption of general rules.

The agreement to live by general rules to enforce cooperative moral behavior is motivated by *mutual awareness* of the rational benefits or advantages of coordinated moral behavior. The members are motivated by the rational (or as Hume preferred to call it, the "sensible") awareness of the view that cooperative living is the best rational choice for the

optimum and secure realization of their expected utility maximization. In the agreement to live by the rules of social conventions, each member is aware of the common interest and the rational necessity of coordinated behavior. The argument is supported by Hume's belief that, in the collective agreement, each person feels in his own heart the general sense of common interest. According to his argument, "convention be meant a sense of common interest; which sense each man feels in his own breast, which he remarks in his fellows, and which carries him, in concurrence with others, into a general plan or system of actions, which tends to public utility" (E. 306). It is not only necessary that each be aware of the advantages of coordinated cooperative behaviour and the inconveniences of its absence, but also that each be aware that the other is also aware of similar advantages and inconveniences. Each member is aware that each of the other members is aware of the interests and benefits all have in coordinated behavior. The effective functioning of a collective agreement requires all the members to have sufficient knowledge of the common interests and advantages, when the convention is mutually honored, and the inconveniences when dishonored. In the agreement, as Pall Ardal puts it, "people discover how deviations from the regularity are disadvantageous, and confidence in the continuation of the regularity is gradually built up. The sense of common interest will make it reasonable for us to base our conduct on the assumption that others will follow the rules as well."[54]

Besides the mutual awareness of the advantages of living cooperatively by general rules, members of a moral community are sensible of the rationality of *mutual performance* of the agreement to regulate their acts and practices by general rules. On the Humean convention theory, collective agreement is an institutional framework by which members of a social community rationally come into a mutual understanding to undertake a cooperative venture on the expectation that each member would perform his part of the agreement. That is, communal moral institutions are grounded in mutual interests and expectations of mutual performance of the terms of the agreement. Expectation of mutual performance underscores a continuous commitment to general rules and agreement. As David Lewis argues, "circumstances that will help to solve coordination problem …are circumstances in which the agents become justified in forming mutual expectations belonging to a coordinated system."[55] The agreement is motivated by the rational awareness of the view that they all either gain together by mutual respect and commitment to general rules to enforce cooperative moral behavior, or lose together by failing thereof.[56] As Hume illustrated it, "I observe, that it will be for my interest to leave another in the possession of his goods, *provided* he will act in the same manner with regard to me. His is sensible of a like interest in the regulation of his conduct" (T. 490, Hume's emphasis). Or, as he described it in the *Enquiry*, convention is something that is "advantageous to two or more

persons, if all perform their part; but what loses all advantages if only one perform" (E. 306). The argument supports the idea that collective agreement as an intersubjective cooperative venture grounded in rational efforts and commitments to pursuing common interests. The mutual decision to form an agreement to enforce rules to promote common goals is motivated by the rational awareness of the view that, in the end, it will turn to benefit or maximize everyone's expected utility. Each agent is also committed to supporting the efforts of the other on the rational expectation of a similar support. The collective agreement requires of each member a mutual response to the intentions of the other on the conviction that, rationally, all others would also do the same.[57] Collective agreement requires cooperative responses and expectations of mutual performance because the members are rationally aware that this is the best means of securing their properties and other fundamental rights on a safer foundation. Members of a cooperative venture are, in their joint activities, bounded together by rational expectations of mutual responsiveness and benefits.

It is striking to note that, despite his criticisms of Hume's moral theory in many ways, David Gauthier (1979) finds the normative or regulatory character of the Humean convention theory impressive.[58] What he finds most impressive about the Humean theory involves its recognition of the view that a person's reason for conforming to the regularity of cooperative behavior in society rationally requires her awareness and expectation of general conformity. In discussing the Humean convention theory of collective agreement in his paper, "David Hume, Contractarian," Gauthier argues.

> what essentially distinguishes a convention from other regularities of behavior among the members of groups is that almost every person's reason for conforming to the regularity includes his awareness and expectation of general conformity. Typically this reason will relate to interest, and will include both a preference for general conformity, rather than the expected outcome of general nonconformity, and a preference for personal nonconformity unless there is general conformity.[59]

Gauthier interprets Hume's concept of convention as a normative regularity theory of cooperative behaviour. On this, he declares himself as following the normative interpretation of Hume's concept of convention initiated by David Lewis.[60] Gauthier formulates the Humean regularity theory of convention in the following way.

> [A convention is] a regularity *R* in the behavior of persons *P in situations S*, such that part of the reasons that most of these persons conform to *R* in *S* is that it is common knowledge (among *P*) that most persons conform to *R* in *S* and that most persons expect most (other) persons to conform to *R* in S" (p. 6).

In the definition of convention, Gauthier reiterated the Humean view that a collective agreement involves a communal enforcement of regularity of cooperative behavior. David Lewis is an ardent

advocate of the normative or binding force of the rules of convention.[61] According to Lewis, "Any convention is, by definition, a norm which there is some presumption that one ought to conform to...It is also, by definition, a socially enforced norm: one is expected to conform, and failure to conform tends to evoke unfavorable responses from others."[62] As we noted, on the Humean thought, our property and other rights are secure only when we mutually agree to enforce regularity of cooperative moral behavior by general rules, particularly the rules of justice. For example, we enforce consistent cooperative moral behavior and obedience to general rules by censuring the knave whose practices go against the fundamental principles of the agreement. Moral and all other social institutions function upon rules, and this is the basis of the Humean idea that morality requires collective agreement to live by rules to enforce regularity of cooperative behavior. As Hume argued: "There is a principle of human nature, which we have frequently taken notice of, that men are mightily addicted to *general rules*, and that we often carry our maxims beyond those reasons, which first induc'd us to establish them"(T. 551). Subsequently, "every quality of action, of every human being must, by this means, be ranked under some class or denomination, expressive of general censure or applause" (E. 273). Morality embodies norms and conventions of behavior that enjoin the moral community to reward obedience to general rules, including conformity to cooperative behavior, and reproach or reprehend threats to the security of society. Poor opinion, distrust, reproaches and unfavorable responses are among the natural punishments one suffers from us for failing to conform to mutually agreed convention to enforce expectation of cooperative behavior and respect for general rules.[63]

Now, the claim that Hume believed that we enforce regularity of behavior by a common agreement to general rules appears to conflict with the central place that moral character or moral dispositions plays in Hume's moral thought. That is, it might be argued that, in Hume's moral thought, it is character that determines our moral lives, but not rules or principles. On this view, Hume's moral theory is not a "rule-centered" but a "virtue-centered" theory. (What this view means will be understood shortly.) It is my belief that character is an important element in his virtue ethical theory, nevertheless the idea of general rules is, in a fundamental way, a prominent theme of Hume's moral thought; the two are not irreconcilable. I will argue shortly that the cultivation (and habituation) of a good character requires living and acting in a regular way according principles or rules. Given my belief that "principles" and "laws" occupy a central place in Hume's moral thought, in what follows, I want to clarify my position on the issue.[64] The clarification is also important in addressing what appears to be a problem of conflating Hume's virtue ethics with his action theory, as particularly exemplified by my Humean discussion of

normative reasons for actions in chapter three and the discussion on Hume's concept of moral dispositions or character in chapters four and five.

7.3.4. *THE RUELE-CENTERED AND VIRTUE-CENTERED THEMES OF MORALITY*

There is a general dispute in ethics whether morality should be conceived of as primarily concerned with the cultivation of moral dispositions or character, as contrasted with a concern about rules or principles of moral behaviour or actions.[65] J. B. Schneewind characterizes the distinction as "virtue-centered" and "rule-centered" views of morality.[66] Conceiving character at the core of morality, the virtue-centered view claims that the central moral problem is about the question of "What sort of person am I to be?" but not the question of "What ought I to do?"[67] Leslie Stephen defends the virtue-centered view as follows: "...morality is internal. The moral law...has to be expressed in the form, 'be this,' not the form, 'do this.'...the true moral law says 'hate not,' instead of 'kill not.'...the only mode of stating the moral law must be as rule of character."[68] The rule- or act-centered view, by contrast, conceives the central task of morality to consist in the study of principles of morality that provide structures, criteria, or methods as guides for leading or pursuing a praiseworthy moral life. The point of morality is, according to the rule-centered view, the study of rules and principles that advise and direct us regarding what we must (or ought to) do to be moral.[69] So, the central question of moral philosophy, according to the rule-centered view, involves the question: "What ought I to do?" or "How ought I to live?" (as contrasted with the question "What kind of person ought I to be?")

The distinction between virtue-centered and act-cantered views describes two central themes of morality. However, I do not think they are irreconcilable; the two are complementary. I find it persuasive William Frankena's suggestion that we do not have to choose between the two. He writes:

> Should we construe morality as primarily a following of certain principles or as primarily a cultivation of certain dispositions and traits? Must we choose?...I propose...that we regard the morality of principles and the morality of traits of character, or doing and being, not as rival kinds of morality between which we must choose, but as two complementary aspects of the same morality.[70]

Parodying a famous dictum of Kant, Frankena defends the view that the two complement each other by arguing that "principles without traits are impotent, [but] traits without principles are blind."[71] The details of Frankena's argument is that "for every principle there will be a morally good trait, often going by the same name, consisting of a disposition or tendency to act according to it; and for every morally good trait there will be a principle defining the kind of action in which it is to express itself."[72] According to his illustration, "it is hard to see how we could know what

traits to encourage or inculcate if we did not subscribe to principles, for example, to the principle of utility, or to those of benevolence and justice."[73] We learn from Frankena the view that we obtain the standards for determining the traits of character we cultivate in our children or ourselves by invoking either "teleological" or "deontological" rules. We appeal to what he calls "*trait-teleological*" rules to support why a character trait must be cultivated by showing that its development promotes a net balance of good over evil either for the self, society, or the world at large.[74] On this view, a virtuous character, such as generosity, is a moral disposition worth developing because generous behavior or activities give comfort and relief to others. On the other hand, others such as Kantians, appeal to "*trait-deontological*" rules to support why we ought to develop a particular character trait, such as promise-keeping, by showing that it is intrinsically good and must therefore be morally cultivated as such.[75]

It is not clear where Hume fits in the debate. According to Schneewind's suggestion, Hume placed virtue at the core of morality to provide a better account of the distinction between "perfect" and "imperfect" duties[76] that preoccupied the philosophical attention of the natural law lawyers, such as Pufendorf and Grotius.[77] Schneewind writes: "We should see Hume as trying to show that a theory making virtue rather than law the central concept of ethics can give a better account of the distinction [between perfect and imperfect duties] than that given by the natural lawyers who invented it."[78] Schneewind does not reject the idea that Hume subscribed to the "rule-centered" view but he restricts laws and principles only to Hume's discussions of artificial virtues. That is, in Schneewind's view, the rule-centered view can be found in Hume only in his discussions of artificial virtues, such as the rules of justice.[79]

On my view, Hume's commitment to the virtue-centered view cannot be plausibly denied; discussions of virtues occupy a central place in his moral theory. This acknowledgment is bolstered by my argument in chapter four and five. But I think the space that Hume accorded the rule-centered view is larger than what Schneewind admits. Principles and rules are at the center of Hume's moral theory, including his discussions of both the natural and the artificial virtues. As I indicated in chapter one, Hume's naturalistic moral theory generally explores the mind to discover the psychological dispositions that we take as the causal principles that determine and thus explain human behavior and actions. As he formulated one of his arguments: "In pretending therefore to explain the *principles* of human nature, we in effect propose a complete system of the sciences, built on the foundation almost entirely new, and the only one upon which they can stand with any scrutiny." (T. xix-xxiii, my emphasis). As we saw in chapter one, a crucial task of Hume naturalistic approach to morality involved a search for general principles to ground morality in a scientific foundation. It was this fundamental ambition that deeply inspired his interest in the

empirical method of discovering general principles, not only to guide and regulate the behaviour of events and actions, but also to explain and understand the principles underlying their causal manifestations. As we noted, the law of regularity, a model of the law of nature that he adopted from the natural sciences, is also a fundamental doctrine in Hume's reconciling project that argues for the view that the general laws of nature apply also in the moral realm. He did not also abandon the principle in his discussions of the virtues (both the natural and the artificial).

Hume often explained why cultivating the virtues (both the artificial and the natural) is useful or important in terms of the principle of utility, or what Frankena calls "trait-teleological" rules. He conceived the meaningfulness of many virtues (including some of those that he classified as natural as well as artificial) in terms of their instrumental value or usefulness to the person who possesses it or to society.[80] Defending his view that a virtue's "usefulness is only a tendency to a certain end," consider Hume's argument:

> Usefulness is agreeable, and engages our approbation. That is a matter of fact, confirmed by daily observation. But, *useful*? For *what*? For somebody's interest, surely. Whose interest then? Not our own only: For our approbation frequently extends farther. It must, therefore, be action approved of; and these we may conclude, however remote, are not totally indifferent to us. By opening up, we shall discover one great source of moral distinctions" (E. 218).

The central place that Hume accorded general rules is very striking when we turn to his discussions of moral judgments. All judgments about moral issues, in Hume's moral thought, must conform to general rules that apply equally and impartially to similar moral cases. He wrote:

> There is a principle of human nature, which we have frequently taken notice of, that men are mightily addicted to *general rules*, and that we often carry our maxims beyond those reasons, which first induc'd us to establish them. Where cases are similar in many circumstances, we are apt to put them on the same footing, without considering that they differ in the most material circumstances (T. 551, Hume's emphasis).

The idea that general rules are indispensable to morality was in Hume's mind when he identified the moral point of view with the general or the intersubjective point of view. We mutually agree to conform to general rules not only to use and speak a common moral language, but also to enforce regularity of cooperative behaviour for common interests. Hume argued:

> The distinction, therefore, between these species of sentiments [of humanity and self-love] being so great and evident, language must soon be moulded upon it, and must invent a particular set of terms, in order to express those universal sentiments of censure or approbation, which arise from humanity, or from views of general usefulness and its contrary. Virtue and vice become then known; morals are recognized; certain general ideas are framed of human conduct and behaviour; such measures are expected from men in such situations. *This action is determine'd to be conformable to our abstract rule; than other contrary. And by such universal principles are the particular sentiments of self-love frequently controlled and limited*" (E. 274, emphasis added).

General rules are, in Hume's discussion of the communal enforcement of conformity to morality, conventional rules or rules of justice. Hume devoted the last book of his discussion of morality in the *Treatise* to develop a convention theory of justice to highlight the indispensable need for general rules in cooperative and peaceful living in a social-moral community. The agreement to live by general rules provides a regulatory mechanism for enforcing regularity of cooperative moral behaviour in society.[81] Like other social institutions, morality contains institutional rules that govern and regulate moral practices. General rules set boundaries to moral practices; they are also mutually adopted to protect and secure society on a firm and stable foundation. Mutually, regularity of cooperative moral behavior and conformity to general rules and social conventions is to everyone's advantage.

The argument supports the view that the enjoyment of social advantages requires a collective agreement to mutually adopt general rules to enforce regularity of moral behaviour for common or mutual interests. I cooperate with social standards and expectations morally on my moral behaviour, beliefs, and other practices, at least in part, because my membership of society involves a tacit acceptance that I will so conduct my activities. I do so as part of our joint effort to preserve and safeguard our society as a peaceful place to live and conduct our affairs. Morality requires the cultivation and internalization of group or "We-consciousness." The internalization of We-consciousness is essential for social or community entrenchment and survival. As we noted in the beginning of the discussion, morality, on the Humean view, requires of us to judge and conceive the virtuousness of a character from the "We" or the intersubjective perspective. The We-consciousness must be internalized as part of our habits or character.[82] But in the Humean moral system, we need not adopt We-consciousness only in our *beliefs and judgments alone.* The We-consciousness must be seen also in our *attitudes and actions*. In addition to *We-consciousness*, we need to cultivate also *We-attitudes* or character in our actions, since morality is a practical institution involving not only beliefs and judgments; morality crucially involves decisions about actions and conduct. The We-consciousness must have a necessary connection to our attitudes and practices; the practices themselves must have a "We-content", since there is a conceptual link between our beliefs and the way we act. As Hume argued, "When this common sense of interest is mutually express'd, and is known to both, it produces a suitable resolution and behaviour." (T. 490). We recall from chapter three the view that, in the Humean internalist view, morality naturally (necessarily) motivates action. But to be motivated by the right kind of desires and interests, and also live in conformity to social conventions and values that require of us cooperative behavior, we need to internalize general rules. We adopt and internalize general rules

to restrain the overriding motivations of our narrow sentiments to cultivate the character that would enable us to live consistently with the collective agreement to enforce cooperative moral behaviour. Hume defended the view in the following way.

> I have already observ'd, that justice takes its rise from human conventions; and that these are intended as a remedy to some inconveniences, which proceed from the concurrence of certain *qualities* of the human mind with the *situation* of external objects. The qualities of the mind are *selfishness* and *limited generosity*: And the situation of external objects is their *easy change*, join'd to their *scarcity* in comparison of the wants and desires of men (T. 494, Hume's emphases).

Given the overriding power of our natural selfishness and the limitations of our natural sympathetic sentiments, we require general rules as guides to habituate ourselves to judge on principles that conform to the point of view of morality. The development of a steady character is a crucially important moral requirement for living a virtuous life. Among other things, a person habituates and conditions herself to develop a virtuous character by having a steady rule to guide her regular behavior and conduct. To do this, the person needs to reflectively realize the importance of collective agreement that provides her with general rules to restrain the overriding passions that often compete with the need to live cooperatively and consistently to general rules and agreements. On the Humean moral system, conscious internalization of general rules form an essential part of the habituating process by which we cultivate virtuous character to live a cooperative moral life in society. The collective agreement to live by general rules is an effective social instrument for disciplining and habituating ourselves to develop regularity of cooperative behaviour. We mutually agree to fix general rules as moral standards to check and regulate our conduct (to guide us against causing harm to each other).[83]

Also, in appraising moral characters, situations, or events, a person judges well when he adopts a general rule that constrains him to remain neutral to his partial interests and affiliations. As I have argued strenuously, morality requires of us to restrain our natural sentiments against the influence of personal biases or partial interests, when making judgments about a moral character, particularly, judgments of moral culpability. In Hume's moral thought, morality requires of us the necessity to abridge or train our original sentiments to judge impartially. He wrote: "'Tis necessary, therefore, to abridge these primary impulses, and find some general principles, upon which all our notions of morals are founded" (T. 473). As we noted in chapter four, we require practice to train and educate our faculty of moral sense for impartial judgments and assessments of our conduct as well as those of others. Moreover, the internalization of general rules to habituate and cultivate a virtuous character gives us confidence in the trustworthiness and predictability of our moral behaviors. As Hume nicely defended it, by adopting the rules of the

conventional agreement, "this experience assures us still more, that a sense of interest has become common to all our fellows, *and gives us a confidence of the future regularity of their conduct*. And 'tis only the expectation of this, that our moderation and abstinence are founded" (T. 490, my emphasis). Confidence in the regularity of conduct, as Hume maintained in the passage, is essentially required by the rules of collective agreements. The idea that we mutually adopt general rules to enforce confidence in the regularity of our conduct highlights the normative character and the enforcement mechanism of the Humean convention theory of collective agreement.

7.4. A HUMEAN RESPONSE TO SEARLE AND HAMPTON

In this final discussion, I want to respond to two general challenges to the Humean convention theory of collective agreement. Hume's interest-based theory of collective intentionality may be rejected. The Humean account indicates that collective agreements require each partner to the agreement to be sensibly aware of (a) the advantages or benefits of coordinated cooperative behaviour and the inconveniences of its absence, and (b) that each be aware that the other is also aware of similar advantages and inconveniences. On these requirements, the Humean account grounds collective intentionality in mutual expressions of intentions and expectations of mutual commitments to the rules of collective agreements. The account derives collective or We-intentionality from the intentions and expectations of the individual members of the agreement. Searle would reject the Humean account. He sees a logical problem in the account of We- or collective-agreement in terms of the expressions of "I intentions." He tries to reduce to logical absurdity theories that ground collective agreement in "I-intend" expressions. He defends the objection in his analysis of the relation between what he calls "singular and collective intentionality, between for example, the facts described by 'I intend' and 'We intend'."[84]

Searle illustrates the problem by arguing that no quantitative sum of "I-intentions" can add up to "We-" or collective-intentionality. According to his argument, the "reason why collective intentionality cannot be reduced to individual intentionality…is that it does not add up to a sense of *collectivity*. No set of 'I Consciousness,' even supplemented with beliefs, adds up to a 'We Consciousness'."[85] Searle concludes that the explication of collective intentionality in terms of "I-intentions" entails the following regress absurdity. "[I]f we intend to do something together, then that consists in the fact that [(a)] I intend to do it in the belief that you also intend to do it; and [(b)] you intend to do it in the belief that I also intend to do it. And [(c)] each believes that the other has these beliefs, and [(d)] has these beliefs about these beliefs, and [(e)] these beliefs about

these beliefs about these beliefs…etc. in potentially infinite hierarchy of beliefs."[86] The simplified form of the logical problem is that shared intentional beliefs entail an infinite chain of belief expressions, such as "I believe that you believe that I believe that you believe that I believe … and so on."[87]

Searle's regress argument is misleading. When examined closely, the belief claims after (c) (i.e., d-e) involve unnecessary regress reasoning. The expressions of the intentions in his argument only requires the following three conditions, which is a replication of (a)-(c) belief claims. In his argument, let us assume that the collective agreement is between two parties, X and Y. (1) Party X assures itself of its intention to honour the agreement, in the belief that Y intends to do the same. (2) Party Y also assures itself of its intention to honour the agreement, in the belief that X intends to do the same. And, (3) X assures Y, and Y in turn assures X, each other's intention to honor the agreement, when the other does the same. The collective agreement is sealed at this point. After the self and mutual assurances to live by the rules of the agreement, I do not see the need for further expressions of intentions. The regress arguments from (d) onwards in Searle's argument are not necessary for closing the deal in the agreement.

Searle's consideration of the explication of collective intentionality in terms of I-intend expressions as a reductive account is also quite misleading. The reductive argument is plausible only after the collective agreement is sealed, but not in the process of its formation. The terms or rules of the collective agreement are not reducible to the judgment or determination of individual intentions (beliefs, desires or interests) after the deal is sealed. Collective agreement is grounded in We-consciousness, and the rules cannot be unilaterally overturned by the intention or judgment of any of the individual members by determining social and moral issues from personal point of view. After the agreement is sealed, everyone is required to judge and determine moral values from the We perspective. Collective intentionality takes the form of We-intersubjective agreement such that the rules of the agreement cannot be reduced to the determination of individual intentions, after the agreement is sealed. We cannot change the rules of the game, after the game is over, so to speak. We attempt to reduce the collective agreement to "I-intentions" when we try to overturn the We-intentionality to I-intentions, for example, by determining or assessing the moral good from personal opinions and interests, after we have mutually expressed and assured ourselves and the other members of our agreement to the terms of the convention. But, the formation of the collective agreement by the expressions of "I-intentions" is not a reduction of the We-intentionality to I-intentions; the derivation of collective intentionality from I-intend expressions is not necessarily a reductive account. Over-turning the We-intersubjective judgment to I-intend judgments would involve reducing the We-consciousness to I-

consciousness, but uniting ourselves to mutually seal the collectivity of the I-intend expressions into an intersubjective web of cooperative bond does not necessarily entail a reduction of the We to I-consciousness.

The problem that the above response faces is the question whether we can quantify the collectivity of the I-intend expressions into We-intentionality or consciousness, as Searle argued. This is an unnecessary metaphysical query, as far as we understand collective intentionality to imply a collective agreement among a communal group. Searle is actually ambiguous about what he means exactly by his claim that no amount of I-intend expressions can yield We-or collective-consciousness. He was ambiguous about his account of the causal process by which collective intentionality evolves. He ambiguously posited two competing accounts of the causal source of the capacity for collective agreement. In one account, he construed the capacity for collective agreement as an intentional feature that causally emerges from (or causally supervening upon) our background pre-intentional biological nature. As I argued in the beginning of the discussion, by deriving our capacity for collective intentionality from certain non-intentional or "pre-intentional" background biological features of the mind, Searle's account suggests the view that our capacities for collective intentionality is by itself not a primitive ability, and I find this an impressive account. It suggests the interesting view that the capacity for collective intentionality emerges from our primitive biological human nature. As I indicated, this account is an interesting theory that a Humean may find attractive. It was a similar argument that I defended on behalf of Hume in chapter four when I considered moral sentiments as reflective sentiments that supervene on (causally emerges from) our original biological capacities. This much agrees with Searle's account.

However, Searle has a second account of the nature of collective intentionality that is puzzling. In defending his rejection of the formation of collective agreement by I-intend expressions, Searle conceives collective intentionality as by itself a primitive We-consciousness that is intrinsically located in the minds of individual social actors. That is, despite considering the ability for collective intentionality as a capacity that we causally develop out of our primitive biological human nature, Searle in another account conceives collective intentionality as *by itself* a primitive biological feature. Consider his argument. "Collective intentionality is ***a biologically primitive phenomenon*** that cannot be reduced or eliminated in favour of something else."[88] In defending this view, Searle conceives collective intentionality as a primitive We-conscious states that we all have in our minds. On this view, collective intentionality is purely a primitive biological phenomenon that forms a constitutive part of our mental life. That is, collective intentionality takes the form of "We intend" consciousness that exists in our individual minds. In

Searle's words, "The intentionality that exists in each individual head has the form 'we intend.'"[89] On this account, when Jim and Jane are involved in a genuine cooperative activity, for example, when they are rowing the boat on the sea together, each of the two performs their part by "We intend" belief or consciousness in their individual minds. Searle contrasts his account with orthodox view of collective or We- intentionality in terms of "I intend" in the minds of individual actors.[90] Searle's conception of collective intentionality as a primitive biological feature was the basis of his consideration of collective-intentionality as We-consciousness that is intrinsically located in our individual minds, an argument he defended against the traditional account that derives collective intentionality from the expressions of I-intentions. The problem is that it seems inconsistent to regard collective intentionality in one sense as something that is causally developed from something else (from our primitive non-intentional states) and at the same time conceive it in another sense as by itself a primitive biological feature. The same thing cannot be an *efficient* and a *causal* entity at the same time; the cause must be different from the effect.

Two things are missing in Searle's account: (a) the failure to recognize different levels of the process by which the collective intentionality is fully realized, and (b) that cooperative behavior and activities are grounded in expectations of mutual benefits. The biological capacity upon which collective intentionality causally supervenes is not an actual intentional capacity. This, Searle rightly captures in one of his accounts. But his other account that conceives collective intentionality as by itself a primitive biological capacity fails to recognize the view that collective intentionality becomes fully actualized artificially (non-biologically). The collective agreement is sealed by the sensible recognition by members of the social community of the view that it would be for everybody's rational interest to live by general rules to mutually enforce cooperative social and moral behavior. Collective intentionality emerges from our biological capacities *via* mutual agreement to pursue common interests. The agreement to live by general rules to enforce cooperative behavior to promote common interests need to be endorsed and ratified by mutual expression of intentions to live by the rules. The We-consciousness is an ideal we strive for in society, but not something we have by being innately written on our minds. We internalize the We-consciousness by practice under the sensible recognition that this is the best rational option for social and cooperative living that safeguards and maximizes our mutual interests. The human beings that we currently know actually enter into joint or cooperative activities by mutual expressions of intentions and interests. A cooperative venture is founded in a rational awareness of its mutual benefits and confident expectations of mutual commitment and compliance. In virtue of being an agreement, the collective agreement or intentionality can be something that is instituted artificially by a joint (mutual) and conscious effort, and mutual

understanding. By itself, collective intentionality is not a biologically given phenomenon. The intentionality of the We-consciousness requires conscious (intentional) internalization and mutual adoption of general rules. Members habituate themselves to live by rules based on their reflective awareness that this is the best rational choice for maximizing their mutual welfare.

The Humean convention theory of collective agreement is practically appealing, since it conforms to our commonsense view of the incentives that motivate us to adopt and commit ourselves to general rules and collective agreements. Also, relative to Searle's account that conceives collective intentionality as a primitive biological feature that is or innately ingrained in our individual minds, the Humean theory is scientifically illuminating, given the facts we currently know about human nature and the factors that motivate its actions. Searle's belief that we have a We-collective intentionality that is primitively or innately imprinted on our minds is a strange doctrine; it is not supported by any scientific fact that we currently know about human nature. The Humean account presents a more scientific or realistic picture of human motivations. The idea that we are born with a kind of innate "We-consciousness" by which we conduct our social activities is a kind of mystical belief that cannot be proved about human beings such as us. It seems mysterious to contend that human beings are motivated to act cooperatively in society because of certain innate "We-consciousness" that is primitively attached to our brains. The Humean account captures the realistic view that, primarily, human beings are motivated by interests. Individuals are motivated to live cooperatively in society by general rules and social conventions because they see that it is in their rational interest to do so. Their motivation to live by general rules is determined by the real need for cooperative behavior to safeguard, protect, and promote their mutual interests. They are motivated to live by cooperative agreement because they recognize that their interests and security are at stake. Thus, concerning the causal process by which the We-consciousness or collective intentionality is obtained, the Humean account is impressive. The general rules in which the cooperative behavior of the individuals are grounded become a constitutive part of the behavior of the social and moral actor by a reflective awareness of the rationality of accepting (agreeing) to habituate her character and behavior by general rules. The rules are not by themselves constitutive to the practices of the individuals simply by being innately (biologically) written on their individual minds at birth. The rules are learned in society. Rules become a constitutive component of our social practices by first learning them. We do not have innate ideas about how to play the game of chess, for example, until we have learned the rules. It is after we have internalized the rules by training that we effectively play the game, speak language, or behave morally, and similar other social activities. We may not need to refer to a

rule-book for the effective performance of the activities, but we acquire this dexterity and habit by training and learning the conventional rules of the activities.

The Humean convention theory of collective agreement may be rejected from another perspective. The theory may be rejected because it grounds cooperative moral behavior in human interests. The Humean convention theory of collective agreement is "interest-based." The theory is grounded in the concept of common or intersubjective interests. A critic may argue that founding morality in a social agreement by itself does not commit Hume to a belief in the intersubjectivity of moral values. A social agreement can be a competitive venture whereby each member is mainly concerned only with the best negotiation that enhances and maximizes his own welfare. This form of social agreement could be said as based purely on a competitive negotiation, as contrasted with a joint venture grounded in cooperative interest and common bond. Thus, despite grounding it objectively in intersubjective or collective agreement, Hume's interest-based convention theory of intersubjective agreement is apt to be interpreted as still involving the belief that morality is a personal discourse. That is, his conventional account of collective agreement may be seen as still committing him to the idea that a person's agreement to cooperative moral behavior is motivated by her self-interests. Hampton is behind the objection. Hampton, in her criticism of Hume's concept of the GPV, concludes that Hume considered the adoption of the GPV as motivated by the sentiment of self-interest. We adopt the general point of view from self-interested motive of avoiding conflicts and inconveniences. According to her argument, Hume "suggests that self-interested passions are largely responsible for wanting the end of this inconvenience and confusion. Although concern for family and friends might also play a role in one's desiring stability and uniformity of judgment, certainly concern for self and one's own well-being and comfort is a powerful reason for rejecting the chaos."[91]

Hampton's objection is mistaken. Her suggestion that we adopt the moral point of view from a self-interested motive is the exact argument Hume defended. Hume did not abstract personal interests from the common moral point of view. The common point of view involves collective or coordinated mutual interests. The GPV is the intersection or equilibrium, so to speak, of mutually coordinated interests. Hampton's account fails to recognize the idea that the general point of view is adopted to invent general rules to enforce cooperative behavior. I think the alleged problem is really a demonstration of how the apparent antithesis between subjective and objective moral demands can be admirably reconciled without a paradox. The idea may be seen as a problem based on a wrong understanding of the concept of "moral-interests," at least as they play out in Hume's moral thought.

Admittedly, it was Hume's view that the adoption of a collective agreement to live by general rules to enforce cooperative moral behaviour is motivated by interests. But as I called to attention in chapter four, in Hume's moral thought, two kinds of interests have to be distinguished. As I insisted, in his moral theory, *moral interests* have to be distinguished from *natural interests*. Natural self-interests are biological dispositions. They are the dominant controlling passions in us. But they are natural forces that morality requires of us to redirect, and sometimes control and restrain. On the other hand, in his convention theory of collective agreement, we should recall that Hume referred to the moral interest upon which the agreement is founded as "mutual" or "common interests." For Hume, convention "assures us still more, that the sense of interest has become common to all our fellows, and gives us a confidence of the future regularity of their conduct: And 'tis only on the expectation of this, that our moderation and abstinence are founded" (T. 490). As we noted in the discussion, moral interests, on the Humean account are intersubjective values grounded in common bond and solidarity. The problem that Hume's account faces involves how to coordinate the common good such that it does not end up demanding the individuals to pay too much sacrifice of their personal commitments. Thus, morality, as Hume confronted it, is a problem of how to find a coordinated mechanism for reaching intersubjective beliefs regarding what is morally desirable and worth of pursuing. This requires mutually adopting general principles to live by, principles that accommodate and safeguard everyone's interests. Hume was not the first, and indeed the only one, to be confronted with this moral problem. It is a problem with which other prominent moral philosophers in history of moral philosophy, including Hobbes, Kant, and recently Rawls, all in their unique way wrestled to address.

7.5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The discussion has defended a Humean view that conceives morality as a regulatory social institution that exists in the intersubjective public world. Morality emerges conventionally from collective or communal agreement to enforce cooperative moral behavior for mutual interests. The Humean account suggests the view that moral values and judgments are objective values projected onto the social world by collective or intersubjective agreement. The issue about moral objectivity to which Hume devoted attention involved how to obtain general principles to restrain our natural selfishness to live by intersubjective rules and values to enforce cooperative moral living in society for mutual benefits. Having mutually adopted and respectable general principles that are mutually advantageous is a benefit that outweighs the price for which we have to pay individually when each of us unilaterally acts according to his natural self-referential

interests. Hume devoted his moral theory to defend the advantages of cooperative living according to mutually adopted general rules. In all these, he never discounted his belief in the subjective root of morality. His intersubjective model of social agreement is still interest-based. As we noted, he grounded conventional collective agreements in his concept of common interests. He perceived the motive for cooperative behaviour as dictated and directed by mutual interests.

The discussion has also emphasized the view that the social constructivity of moral institutions is by collective intentionality. Intentionality is a psychological feature. So, invariably, social-moral values that constructively emerge from the exercise of collective intentionality are psychological phenomena. Moral reality is, in a sense, mind-dependent since it emerges from the expression of intentionality. But since it is a social reality, moral reality has a kind of mind-independent reality. Social moral reality does not depend on the exercise of a single (particular) intentionality for its existence. In other words, social moral reality is independent of the expression of any individual point of view and interest. Moral reality is individual-mind-independent. But it is general or collective (social) mind-dependent since, it is an expression of general or collective intentionality; moral reality emerges from communal psychology.

The discussion has clarified and strengthened some of the arguments I defended in the previous chapters. Particularly, the discussion supports and concludes the arguments I developed in the last five chapters; it supports my earlier references to the idea that a moral institution is, in my Humean moral thought, a regulatory social institution that exists in the intersubjective public world by human projection. The Humean argument that morality evolves conventionally from collective agreement to set up regulatory general standards (or rules) to enforce cooperative moral behaviour for mutual benefits supports my response to anti-Humean criticism of Humean theory of normative reasons in chapter three. As we noted, Smith and Hampton, for example, argue that Hume has no plausible theory of normative reasons. Their argument, as we saw, is grounded in the standard view that the moral good (or the objects of our desires), in Hume's moral system, cannot be rationally criticized. The Humean constructivist account that I have defend in this chapter supports my earlier response that the moral end (good) is, on the Humean thought, determined by communal psychology rather than the intelligence of the individual actors. The moral good that is determined by the intelligence of *hypothetical fully rational moral agents*, as Smith maintains, is scientifically dubious. The Humean constructivist's account also resolves the amoralist and the sensible knave problems that are often raised about Humean theory of moral motivation. Since our community agreed mutually to follow general moral rules to enforce cooperative moral behavior, the amoralist and the sensible knave, by their deviation from the

mutually adopted moral standards, separated themselves from the moral community. The Humean moral constructivism accepts the amoralist and knavery challenges as a real moral puzzle. However, it considers the amoralist and the knave as not acceptable moral characters in our moral community. Finally, the argument brings into explicit and clearer light the social character of Hume's moral theory that I accepted implicitly in my discussion in chapter two, Hume's defense of continuity between what I called the "social-moral" and the natural sciences.

ENDNOTES

Chapter 1

[1] David Wiggins, "Cognitivism, Naturalism, and Normativity: A Reply to Peter Railton," in *Reality, Representation, and Projection*. John Haldane and Crispin Wright (eds.). New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993, p. 302.

[2] For a similar characterization of naturalistic moral theory as explanatory in nature, see Peter Railton (1989) and Nicholas Sturgeon (1985, 1986).

[3] I will use the terms "principles" and "laws" loosely to imply the same idea, though I believe that the meaning of the two could be understood differently.

[4] Historians of philosophy commonly identify Hume's naturalism as a duplication of the empirical method that Newton employed for his natural science. Terence Penelhum particularly argues that Hume's principle of "association of ideas" is a copy of the empirical principle that Newton adopted to study naturalistic phenomena (Penelhum 1993, 120-121). In his outline of Hume's naturalism, Stroud also argues that the successful science that Hume found impressive consisted in his own contemporary Newtonian new science. John P. Wright (1983), on the other hand, tries to impeach the alleged connection between Hume's naturalistic approach to philosophy and the Newtonian scientific method. Although he acknowledges Hume's compliment to Newton's method as insightful, Wright thinks Hume nevertheless "chastens those who have attempted to establish a spiritual explanation on Newton's authority." Instead, Wright thinks Hume gave the credit of the success of the new science to Francis Bacon. Wright's position is based on Hume's remark in the introductory chapter of the *Treatise* in which he referred to Bacon as his Lord who, among other philosophers in England, through their intellectual effort "put the science of man on a new footing." Dominant commentaries are in favour of the idea that Hume was a fan of the Newtonian scientific system.

[5] Title page, xi. I have corrected his spelling of "Reasoning" as "Reafoning."

[6] Chapter two discusses these puzzles.

[7] Besides the hint we obtain from the title of the *Treatise*, Hume's continuity thesis is paramount in many of his writings. For example, it can be found particularly in the introductory chapter of his *Treatise,* his discussions of liberty and necessity in both the *Treatise* and the *Enquiry*, and his discussion, "Of the General Principles of Morals" (in the opening section of his *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*).

[8] Barry Stroud 1977, p. 2.

[9] Stroud, *ibid.* p. 6.

[10] Stroud (1977), p. 1.

[11] Stroud, p. 13.

[12] Stephen Darwall. *The British Moralists and the Internal 'Ought': 1640-1740.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, p. 7.

[13] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*. L. A. Selby-Bigge and P. H. Nidditch (eds.). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978, p. 295; Hume's emphasis. I will abbreviate my references to this book in the main text as "T", followed by a page number. For example, I will refer to page 295 in the text as (T. 295).

[14] Chapter two discusses the similarity that Hume saw between the behaviors of moral and natural phenomena.

[15] David Hume. *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of*

Morals. L. A. Selby-Bigge and P. H. Nidditch (eds.) Third Edition. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975, pp. 174-175 (emphasis supplied). I will usually abbreviate and refer to this book in the text as "E" followed by a page number. For example, I will refer to page 174 of the book as (E. 174).

[16] As we shall see in chapter four, in Hume's empiricist view, the ideas we organize and systematize into empirical data for scientific research and investigations are developed out of simple impressions. The mind reproduces simple impressions into ideas, for example, in accordance with the principle of cause and effect relations. (See Bruce Hunter, "Of Scepticism with Regard to Reason," in *New Essays on Rationalism and Empiricism. Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, Supplementary Volume IV. Edited by Charles E. Jarret, John King-Farlow and F. J. Pelletier. Guelph, Ont.: Canadian Association for Publishing in Philosophy, 1978, p. 191.)

[17] The difficulty in this idea is that it seems to leave out space science.

[18] In a footnote to the passage, Hume identified the other experimental scientists he mentioned in the test to include Locke, Shaftsbury, Mandeville, Hutchinson, and Butler.

[19] For example, compare Hume's effort to systematize morality upon an empirical foundation with Kant who, departing from Hume, saw his rationalistic recourse to morality as "a matter of utmost necessity to work out for once a pure moral philosophy completely cleansed of everything that can only be empirical and appropriate to anthropology." (Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. Translated and analysed by H. J. Paton. New York, etc.: Harper & Row, 1964, p. 57.)

[20] For all the references see David Fate Norton, *The Cambridge Companion to Hume*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 153-254.

[21] *A Kind of History of my Life.* See appendix to the collection of papers by David Fate Norton (1993).

[22] The argument here seems to apply to 'hypothetico-deductive method" of explanation. I discuss the issue in chapter two when I examine the nature of the explanatory principles after which Hume modeled his causal explanatory theory of moral behavior.

[23] This approach is particularly the case with Descartes' *Methods, Principles,* and *Meditations*. But his approach in his *Treatise of Man* and *Passions of the Soul* is an exception.

[24]As Descartes declared, "I was convinced that I must once for all seriously undertake to rid myself of all the opinions which I had formerly accepted, and commence to build anew from the foundation, if I wanted to establish any firm and permanent structure in the sciences." (*The Philosophical Works of* Descartes translated by Elizabeth S. and Haldane and G. R. T. Ross. Cambridge University Press, 1967, Meditation 1.

[25] John P. Wright (1977), p. 222.

[26] Hume's skepticism regarding the motivating or causal efficacy of pure reasoning in morality may be confounded for a rejection of general principles of morality. Hume's conflict with the rationalists was about their method (of reasoning), not simply about the moral principles they tried to derive from it. As the passages I have quoted in the text indicate, Hume agreed with rationalists the idea that to ground it on a firm foundation, morality requires consistent and stable general principles that can apply impartially to equal moral agents and circumstances. His qualm with rationalists was a debate about the appropriate strategy for formulating general principles of morality. In contrast with rationalists' formulation of general principles by deductive inference, Hume formulated general principles based on inductive generalization. (I will defend this view in chapter two.)

[27] This was a bothering concern to Gilbert Harman and C. L. Stevenson. For Harman, see his *The Nature of Morality* (1977), especially, chapter one: "Ethics and Observation." For Stevenson, see his "The Emotive Meaning of Ethical Terms" in Louis P. Pojman (1989), pp. 371-72.

[28] J. B. Watson (1925).

[29] Carl Hempel (1949); Gilbert Ryle, (1949).

[30] For the outline of behaviorism, see John R. Searle. *The Rediscovery of the Mind.*

Cambridge/Massachusetts, etc.: The MIT Press, 1995, pp. 33-35.

[31] We shall see in chapter two Hume's influence on Davidson's "anomalous monism" according to which psychophysical events are not amenable to deterministic laws.

[32] Hume conceived our original human nature (as contrasted with our *moral* sentiments), typically our mental mechanisms such us the original passions, as biological phenomena, and subsequently regarded them as physical in nature. In his words, "'Tis certain, that the mind, in its perceptions, must begin somewhere; there must be some impressions, which without any introduction make their appearance in the soul. As these depend upon natural and physical causes, the examination of them wou'd lead me too far from my present subject into the sciences of anatomy and natural philosophy" (T. 275-276).

[33] One who believes in "is/ought" and "descriptive/normative" disjunctive bifurcation may dispute this thesis. He may interpret this to imply a claim that Hume had no concern about normative moral questions. (See chapters three and five for my response to the problem).

[34] We will discuss in more detailed in the next chapter particular causal principles that fundamentally underscore Hume's moral theory.

[35] For example, Why are moral agents morally culpable for their actions? What is the relation between actions and motives or character? What are the principles by which we regulate, train (educate) and control our natural passions and inclinations? Hume believed that a deeper understanding of moral puzzles such as these requires causal accounts or explanations.

[36] Whether Hume correctly captured the objective of a scientific theory is an independent question that goes beyond my present concern.

[37] Daniel Little raises similar questions about social explanations. See his "Causal Explanation in the Social Sciences," in his *Microfoundations, Method, and Causation*. New Brunswick, N. J.: Transaction Publishers, 1998; p. 197. (I will simply refer to this book as *Microfoundations)*.

[38] My position is influenced by Bas Van Fraassen's argument that "an explanation is an answer to a why-question. So, a theory of explanation must be a theory of why-questions." (See his "The Pragmatic Theory of Explanation," in *Theories of Explanation*. Joseph C. Pitt (ed.). New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988, p. 138.

[39] Naturalists are divided by specific details of the nature of the scientific method in which they ground their naturalism.

[40] I use the term "continuity" non-reductively to imply plurality of sciences. For the discussion of philosophical technicalities about the concept of "continuity" and "plurality" of science, see for example, the papers by Rdolf Carnap, Paul Oppenheim and Hilary Putnam, Jerry Fodor, and Alan Garfinkel, in Part III entitled "Reductionism and the Unity of Science" in the anthology by Richard Boyd, Philip Gasper, and J. D. Trout. *The Philosophy of Science*. London: The MIT Press, 1991.

[41] The discussion is a central issue in epistemology, philosophy of mind, metaphysics, philosophy of language, and ethics. W. V. O. Quine is a prominent figure behind it in epistemology and philosophy of language; David Armstrong and Donald Davidson in metaphysics and Philosophy of mind.

[42] D. M. Armstrong. *A World of States of Affairs*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 5.

[43]Hilary Kornblith identifies the Quinean reductive version of naturalism as "the replacement thesis." I disclaim my Humean version from the Quinean replacement version. First, I do not follow his defense of naturalism from a linguistic route; I have a least concern about the status and functions of language (moral or whatever). Second, I do not endorse his controversial position that philosophy (epistemology) is a chapter of psychology. I maintain the autonomy of philosophy (and ethics in particular), though I regard philosophical inquiries as scientific just as psychology is scientific but not reducible to physics.

[44] In his *Ontological Relativity and Other Essays*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1969. It

has been reprinted in Hilary Kornblith (ed.). *Naturalizing Epistemology*, Second Edition. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1994. My references are to Kornblith's edition.

[45] Quine 1994: 25.

[46] David Brink (1989), pp. 156-157; emphasis in the original text. However, my Humean model differs from Brink's version in two fundamental ways. First, my Humean version rejects external realism in which Brink's version is grounded. Second, I do not agree with his defense of the connection between morality and science by nomic or lawlike supervenience. By contrast, my Humean version conceives the connection loosely. I define morality and the sciences as connected by social construction.

[47] See his "Philosophical Progress in Language Theory," in Howard E. Keifer and Milton K. Munitz (eds.). *Language, Belief and Metaphysics*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1970.

[48] He rejected the rigid distinction between a scientist and a philosopher based on professional affiliation. In his view, one who adopts an empirical or scientific approach to study philosophical problems "may be a philosopher in point of professional affiliation, but a philosopher with an interest in the special science concerned." At the same time, such philosopher "may be an affiliate of the special science, but philosophical attitude and motivation" (Quine, 3). Quine cites eminent scientific philosophers such as Einstein, Bohr, Bondi and Boyle as examples of "scientific philosophers." According to his view, Einstein's "empirical critique of the concept of simultaneity is a philosophical paradigm. Bohr's infusion of epistemology into quantum mechanics makes him another example. Further philosophical spirits in professional physics are the cosmologists, such as Bondi and Boyle" (Philosophical Progress, p. 3).)

[49] Frank Jackson. "Armchair Metaphysics," in Michaelis Michael and O'Leary-Hawthorne (eds.). *Philosophy in Mind*. Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1994, p. 23-24; the italic is mine. He quotes from Kim Sterelny, *The Representational Theory of Mind*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1990, p. ix.

[50] Richard Boyd, "How to Be a Moral Realist," in Stephen Darwall, Allan Gibbard, Peter Railton. *Moral Discourse and Practice*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 132; the italic is mine. I will refer to this book simply as *Moral Discourse*.

[51] Robert Audi, "Realism, Rationality, and Philosophical Method" in *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* vol. 61, No. 1 (1987); p. 67. His paper is a contribution to invited Panel discussion on: "The Future of Philosophy, Sixty-first Annual Pacific Division Meeting, San Francisco, California, March 27, 1987.

[52] Robert Audi 1987: 67.

[53] In contrast with the historian of philosophy, the historian of ideas is concerned with the critical study of a historical philosophical theory. Whether or not his critical study has a bearing on, or a contribution to, contemporary philosophical debate and problem is not my direct and ultimate concern. For a helpful discussion of the distinction between history of ideas and history of philosophy, see Paul Russell (1995), p. 6. See also Bernard William's' introductory comments in his *Descartes: The Project of Pure Inquiry*. Harmondsworth, Middx: Penguin, 1978; p. 9. For a more detail discussion, see the introduction and chapter one of Edward Craig's *The Mind of God and the Works of Man* (1987).

[54] Paul Russell (1995), p. 6.

Chapter 2

[1] I will assume in the discussion the view that moral explanations are social scientific explanations, given my belief that Hume conceived morality as a social institution. Chapter seven discusses the social character of Hume's moral thought.

[2] The two differ, of course, in a special sense. Moral science is unique in terms of the object of its study. Moral science, unlike the other sciences, deals with general principles of moral beliefs, feelings, relations and actions.

[3] Frederick G. Whelan. *Order and Artifice in Hume's Political Philosophy*. Princeton: Princeton

University Press, 1985, p. 68.

[4] We make reliable predictions in both cases, though their degree of precision may differ.

[5] Consider Hume's own claim that a spectator can predict our actions, when she has an adequate information about our character. "A spectator can commonly infer our actions from our motives and character; and even where he cannot, he concludes in general, that he might, were he perfectly acquainted with every circumstance of our situation and temper, and the most secret springs of our complexion and disposition" (T. 408). The prediction may be induced from an observed regular or routine behaviour of the person. In Hume's words, "we can draw inferences concerning human actions, and that those inferences are founded on the experience'd union of like actions with like motives and circumstances (T. 409).

[6] Terence Penelhum (1975: 46) describes the first as "a sufficient condition", and the second, "a necessary condition."

[7] Thomas Nagel, *The View From Nowhere*. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986; p. 120. On Nagel's view, the problem stands whether we consider the action as determined or not. He thinks the notion of moral responsibility turns out to be meaningless as far as an action is considered as part of the order of nature.

[8] Consider Hume's argument. "Few are capable of distinguishing betwixt the liberty of *spontaneity*, as is called in the schools, and the liberty of *indifference*" (T. 407, Hume's emphasis).

[9] Terence Penelhum (1993), p. 130.

[10] Terence Penelhum (1993), p. 130.

[11] Paul Russell, *Freedom and Moral Sentiment* (1995), p. 4.

[12] Terence Penelhum (1993), p. 130.

[13] Paul Russell, p. 13.

[14] Davidson calls attention to the view that in Hume's thought, "motives and desires are ordinary causes of actions" (*Essays on Actions and Events* 1980, p. 15).

[15] Alexander Rosenberg, "The Biological Justification of Ethics: A Best-Case Scenario." *Social Philosophy & Policy*. Vol. 8 Issue 1 (1990), p. 86. It must be clarified that Rosenberg rejected the argument.

[16] One who believes in liberal and cultural individualism may find the objection persuasive.

[17] Susan A. Martinelli-Fernandez, "Social (Re) Construction: A Humean Voice on Moral Education, Social Constructions, and Feminism," in *Feminist Interpretations of David Hume*. Anne Jaap Jacobson (ed.). Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000, p. 195.

[18] Against Lockean principle of "identity of sameness," Hume formulated his principle of identity of diversity in the following way. "We have a distinct idea of an object, that remains invariable and uninterrupted thro' a suppos'd variation of time; and this idea we call that of *identity* or *sameness*. We have also a distinct idea of several different objects existing in succession, and connected together by a close relation; and this to an accurate view affords as perfect a notion of diversity, as if there was no manner of relation among the objects" (T. 253, italics in the original).

[19] The different experiences of a person are united together to represent the individual by the extent to which they can be closely connected. A close relation that successively (constantly) holds the different kinds of a person's experiences makes the individual the same person. In Hume's illustration, "an infant becomes a man, and is sometimes fat, sometimes lean, without any change in his identity" (T. 257).

[20] The relation here is a loose one, not logical.

[21] Hume discussed four particular ways by which the law of regularity could be confirmed in human experience. The first is the differences in the manners of people according to their generation (age) and culture: we learn "the great forces of custom and education, which mould the human mind from its infancy and from it into a fixed and established character" (E. 85-86). The second relates to Hume's view of gender differences. From our experience of the differences

in the behavior and conduct between the sexes (men and women): "we become acquainted with the different characters which nature has impressed upon the sexes, and which she preserves with constancy and regularity" (E. 86). Thirdly, diversity in life transitions (stages from infancy to adulthood) "affords room for many general observations concerning the gradual change of our sentiments and inclinations, and the different maxims which prevail in the different ages of human creatures" (E. 86). Finally, "Even the characters, which are peculiar to each individual, have a uniformity in their influence; otherwise our acquaintance with the persons and our observation of their conduct could never teach us their dispositions, or serve to direct our behaviour with regard to them" (E. 86).

[22] Terence Penelhum (1975), p. 44.

[23] This is particularly the case with Hume's account of causal knowledge. We draw causal inferences and predictions based on our familiarity with the regular occurrences of similar events. The familiarity criteria underscores Hume's appeal to custom and habit as a solution to his inductive skepticism, the claim that our belief that future regularity would resemble regularity in the past, given similar events, is warranted by the custom of the mind or mental habit we acquire through our experience of constant conjunction or regular succession of causal events. (For the concept of familiarity as Hume's epistemic criteria of justifying our causal beliefs, see Terence Penelhum (1975), p. 40, 41.

[24] This view looks like a circular argument, but it is not. Hume maintained that we interpret a person's action from our experience with her motives and character, or her ways of life.

[25] Bas Van Fraassen defends what he calls "constructive empiricism" against the realist model of scientific explanation on the ground that the *Ceteris paribus* or exception clause in scientific experiments is a proof that no absolute knowledge or law can be obtained in science. See his *The Scientific Image* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980; cf. chapters 1, 4, and 5.

[26] One might reject this view and claim that Hume's inductive skepticism denies the possibility of causal laws. But this is false. His inductive skepticism was a query against our commonsense belief in absolute objectivity of scientific knowledge. It was also a query against rationalists' method of deducing general laws. As factual considerations, he thought scientific laws are not deductively certain. But it is false to conclude from this that Hume doubted the possibility of general laws. He set a limit to the general and objective character of general laws.

[27] For a rich debate on the issue whether we obtain general laws of human behavior on the model of the general laws of the empirical sciences, see collection of papers in Michael Martin and Lee C. McIntyre's *Readings in the Philosophy of Social Science* (1994), especially in Part II: "Explanation, Prediction, and Laws."

[28] See David Braybrooke, *Philosophy of Social Science*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ.: Prentice Hall, 1987, p. 3.

[29] David Braybrooke (1987), p. 3.

[30] David Braybrooke *ibid.*

[31] David Braybrooke *ibid.*

[32] David Braybrooke (1987), p. 3-4.

[33] Kincaid, Harold Kincaid, "Defending Laws in Social Sciences," in Martin and Mcintyre (eds.) (1994), p. 112.

[34] John Searle argues against the possibility of general social laws on the model of the general physical laws on the ground that social kinds have multiple realizations. According to his argument, "the defining principle of ...social phenomena set no physical limits on what can count as the physical realization." He defends the argument on the illustration that, as contrasted with physical phenomena, the definition of a social institution, such as money, is based on its social function, not *directly* on its physical attributes. Subsequently, almost anything may count as money, depending on its meaning to a social community. For an outline of Searle's argument a response, see Harold Kincaid, p. 112.

[35] David Brink (1989, p. 158) raises and discusses a similar problem. For a full discussion of the multiple realizability problem, see Putnam (1975: 418), Dennet (1978: xiv-xvi), Boyd 1989).
[36]Kincaid (1994), pp. 111-130.
[37] Alexander Rosenberg, "Hume and the Philosophy of Science," in *The Cambridge Companion to Hume,* edited by David Fate Norton (1993), p. 77. Regarding the question of "what makes derivation from laws explanatory, Rosenberg contends that "nothing in Hume's epistemology will allow such derivations to provide intelligibility or any sort of illumination, still less any sort of necessity rationalists might have held out for real explanation" (p. 78).
[38] G. E. Anscombe, "Causality and Determination," in Ernest Sosa (ed.), *Causation and Conditionals*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975; p. 64-65. (The capitalization is in the original text.)
[39] We shall see shortly problems about this view.
[40] Nicholas Maxwell, "Can there be Necessary Connections between Successive events?" In Richard Swinburne, *The Justification of Induction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974; p. 173.
[41] This view is fully defended by Donald Davidson in his "Psychology as Philosophy" (1974).
[42] Among these include Edward Craig (1987); John P. Wright (1983); *Donald W. Livingston* (1984); Galen Strawson (1989); Fred Wilson (1985, 1997); J. A. Robinson (1995); T. L. Beauchamp and A. Rosenberg (1981); T. L Beauchamp (1995).
[43] Galen Strawson, *The Secret Connexion: Causation, Realism, and David Hume*. Oxford: Clarendon University Press, 1989, vii.
[44]Drawing on a similar position by other Hume scholars, such as Edward Craig (1987), John P. Wright (1983), and Donald. W. Livingston (1984), Strawson writes: "As far as the question of causation is concerned, they argue not only that Hume is not a regularity theorist, but also, as here, that he firmly believes in the existence of something like natural necessity—in the existence of causal power conceived of in some essentially non-Regularity-theory way" (Strawson, *ibid.*).
[45] By this, I am not implying that a deterministic view of law is in itself a realist view. But most often, Hume scholars who interpret him as committed to deterministic view of causal law connect him with scientific realism. (Galen Strawson (1989) and John P. Wright (1983) are typical examples.
[46] Anscombe, *op. cit.* p. 65.
[47] On their view, a similar form of the explanatory model that Hume defended was the linchpin of Hempel's model. They call attention to the view that Hempel argued in a similar way "the terms `empirical science' and `scientific explanation' will...be understood to refer to the entire field of empirical inquiry, including the natural and the social sciences as well as historical research." (Beauchamp and Rosenberg, p. 304; they refer to C. G. Hempel, *Aspects of Scientific Explanation*. New York: Free Press, 1965; p. 333.) In another work which Hempel defended a similar view, he redefined the scope of his explanatory model to include moral actions. He argued in his "Rational Action" that "explanation of intentional actions by appeal to the agent's reasons does not differ in general logical character from explanation generally." (C. G. Hempel. "Rational Action," in *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association*. Yellow Spring, Ohio: The Antioch Press, 1962; p. 5-24; quoted by Donald Davidson, "Essays on Actions and Events," p. 261.)
[48] Tom. L. Beauchamp and Alexander Rosenberg, *Hume and the Problem of Causation*. New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981, p. 305.
[49] Alexander Rosenberg (1993), p. 88 (footnote 32).
[50] In the discussion that follows, I am drawing my argument closely from Donald W. Livingston, *Hume's Philosophy of Common Life*. Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press, 1984, Chapter 7.
[51] Livingston, p. 187.

[52] Livingston, *ibid.* The third one that Livingston mentions include *the symmetry thesis* of explanation and prediction, according to which "explanation and prediction have, logically, the same form, the only difference being the temporal one of whether the justifying statements presented before or after the event has occurred." Thus "what serves to explain an event could have served, if presented earlier, to have predicted it." For example, "If we know that John died because he consumed a certain amount of arsenic, then we could have predicted prior to the event that consuming that amount would lead to death." (Livingson, p. 188).

[53] Livingston overstates this view that he attributes to the covering-law theory; Hempel, for example, did not see social scientific, including historical, explanations as having the same structure as the covering-law model of explanation that he advocated.

[54] Hempel argued: "It seems to me beyond dispute that in any adequate explanation of an empirical phenomenon the explanans must provide good grounds for believing or asserting that the explanadum phenomena did in fact occur." (Carl G. Hempel, "Explanation in Science and in History," in *Philosophical Analysis and History*. William Dray (ed.). New York: Harper and Row, 1966, p. 117.)

[55] Livingston, p. 188-189.

[56] Livingston, *ibid.*

[57] Livingston, *ibid.*

[58] Livingston, *ibid.*

[59] Carl Hempel (1966), p. 68.

[60] Carl G. Hempel, *Philosophy of Natural Science.* Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966, p. 54.

[61] Carl Hempel (1966), p. 58.

[62] Carl Hempel (1966), p, 58.

[63] Carl Hempel (1966), p. 59.

[64] Carl Hempel (1966), p. 66.

[65] Locke divided reasoning into demonstrative and probable arguments and explained them in the following way. "As demonstration is the showing the agreement or disagreement of two ideas, by the intervention of one or more proofs, which have a constant, immutable, and visible connexion one with another; so probability is nothing but the appearance of such an agreement or disagreement, by the intervention of proofs, whose connexion is not constant and immutable, or at least is not perceived to be so, but is, or appears for the most part to be so, and is enough to induce the mind to judge the proposition to be true or false, rather than the contrary." (John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Peter H. Nidditch (ed.). Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975, IV. Xvi.1: p. 164).

[66] The issue whether inductive generalizations are statistical or not is controversial in Hume's causal theory. The issue goes beyond the present discussion.

[67] Immanuel Kant, *Foundations of Metaphysics of Morals.* Lewis White Beck (tr.). New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1990, sect. 408: p. 24.

[68] Kant, *ibid.*, sect. 402: p. 18.

[69] Garrett Cullity and Berys Gaut (eds.). *Ethics and Practical Reason*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997, see their introduction remarks at p. 3.

[70] David O. Brink, *Moral Realism and the Foundations of Ethics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, p. 5.

[71] Brink, *ibid.*, p. 6.

[72] For the outline of the two positions, see Brink, p. 6.

[73] Kant, ibid., sect. 414: p. 30.

[74] I am grateful to Professor Bruce Hunter for this clarification.

[75] A critic of the attacks of social and moral explanations may not find some of the responses above pleasing. He may not agree with the idea that moral and scientific laws and explanations

are different kinds of scientific explanations. He may grant the view that respect for plurality of sciences implicit in the objections is encouraging. But he may argue that the idea of plurality of sciences does not warrant the conclusion that different scientific disciplines have distinct explanatory theories, given their explanatory structure.

[76] Davidson (1980), p.16.

[77] *ibid.*, p. 17.

[78] Donald Davidson (1994), p. 80.

[79] For more on the distinction between plurality and unity of sciences, see Daniel Little, *Explanation*, p. 2. My departure from Little consists in his complete rejection of the idea of "unity of science." I think this is false. There is unity between and among the sciences in a loose sense. This loose sense of the expression does not reduce the sciences to a single discourse.

[80] Harold Kincaid (1994) p. 119.

[81] Edmund Pincoffs, *Quandaries and Virtues: Against Reductivism in Ethics*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1986

[82] See a similar argument by Donald Davidson (1994.), p. 81.

Chapter 3

[1] Though normative questions involve ought issues, my present discussion will not deal with Hume's remarks regarding "is-ought" relationship. This issue is related to Hume's position on fact-value relationship that I will discuss in chapter 5. The present discussion is restricted to the debate about explanation and justification on issues regarding reasons for moral actions.

[2] As Alvin Plantinga puts it, "perhaps the essence of naturalistic approach to epistemology has to do with *normativity*." (Alvin Plantinga, *Warrant and Proper Function*. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993, p. 45.)

[3] Plantinga, *ibid.* p. vi.

[4] What exactly the issue of justifying reasons entails will be noted in the course of the discussion.

[5] The outline of the naturalistic concerns in this section closely follows Hilary Kornblith's (1994) discussion of the issue in naturalized epistemology.

[6] For the description of the Quinean naturalistic model as a replacement account, see Kornblith, *op. cit.* pp. 3ff.

[7] Quine (1994), 25.

[8] Robert Almeder describes similar naturalistic models in epistemology. See his "On Naturalizing Epistemology." *American Philosophical Quarterly*. Volume 27. No. 4 (October, 1990), p. 263.

[9] Almeder, *op. cit.*

[10] Two forms of reformative naturalism may be identified here. "Normative ethical naturalism," as May, Friedman, and Clark describes one of the two forms of naturalism they identify, "attempts to answer questions about what to do, value, or be using knowledge of how we actually behave, what we actually value, what sorts of persons we actually become." Another, "metaethical ethical naturalism," by contrast, "tries to answer questions about the methods we should use to *reach beliefs* about what to do, value, or be, and tries to answer these questions using empirical knowledge of the ways in which people actually reason morally."(*Mind and Morals*, p. 3.) What is common between the two naturalistic ethical theories is that they both draw an interrelationship between the normative issue of what we ought to do and descriptive accounts of what we actually do.

[11] See Hilary Kornblith (1994), p. 1, 2.

[12] See their introduction to their anthology, *Ethics and Practical Reason* (1997), p. 1.

[13] The issue is supported by Iris Murdoch's contention that "How can we make ourselves better? Is a question moral philosophers should attempt to answer. And ... the answer will come partly at least in the form of explanatory and persuasive metaphors." See her *The Sovereignty of Good*:

London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970, p. 78.

[14] Michael Smith (1995), 130.

[15] For a defense of the view that justifying a reason for an action is invariably a causal explanation, see Davidson (1980).

[16] Hume's elaborate discussion of causal determination of human action may be found in sections II and III, pt. I, Book II of the *Treatise* in which he discussed the causes of pride and humility.

[17] John Bricke. *Mind and Morality: An Examination of Hume's Moral Psychology*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996; p. 5

[18] As Carl Hempel argues, "such terms as `hence,' `therefore,' `consequently,' `*because,*' `naturally,' and `obviously' often appear in general law statements: they are used to tie up initial conditions with the event to be explained." (Carl Hempel, (1994: 47; my emphasis.)

[19] Davidson, 1980, p. 9.

[20] Davidson, *ibid.*

[21] The concept "explanans," refers to "the event or pattern to be explained," whereas, "explanandum" refers to "the circumstances that are believed to explain the event." (See Daniel Little. *Varieties of Social Explanation: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Social Science*. Boulder, etc.: Westview Press, 1991, p. 3. (Henceforth, *Social Explanation.*) The original use of the concepts is indebted to Hempel.

[22] Daniel Little. *Social Explanation,* 4. C.f., S. Bromberger, "Why-Questions," in R. G. Colodny (ed.). *Mind and Cosmos*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1966, pp. 86-108. For a critical discussion of "Why-Questions" and explanations, see Bas C. Van Fraassen. *The Scientific Image* (1980, Sect. 2. 8 of chapter 5). Like Fraassen, Little correctly captures the view that causal explanatory questions are "why" questions. But I do not agree with Little's view that why questions regarding why an agent was motivated to perform a given action are not causal explanatory questions. That is, Little argues that some why questions "provoke explanation based on an agent's motivations," but not causal explanations. (See his *Varieties of Social Explanation* (1991.) I do not see the difference. When a person was motivated (by a given reason) to perform a specific action, why can we not say that the action was a caused action. The terms "motivated," "influenced," "induced" and the like, are causal explanatory concepts. We use them to explain why a given action was caused in a particular way.

[23] On his Fraassenean influence, Ellis regards not only causal explanations but also all explanatory statements as information-giving statements. Besides causal explanation, he argues that "A *functional explanation* is information about the role of something in some ongoing system--about the contribution it makes to sustaining it. A *model theoretic explanation* is information about how (if at all) the actual behavior of some system differs from that which it should have ideally if it were not for some perturbing influences and, where necessary, includes some information about what perturbing influences may be causing the difference. A *system explanation* is information about how the fact to be explained is systematically related to other facts." (Brian Ellis, "What Science aims to Do." In Paul M. Churchland and Clifford A. Hooker (eds.). *Images of Science: Essays on Realism and Empiricism, with a Reply from Bas C. van Fraassen*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1985, p. 55.)

[24] Donald Davidson, "Actions, Reasons, and Causes," in his *Essays on Action and Events*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980, p. 3.

[25] Davidson, op. cit., p. 3.

[26] Davidson, op. cit., p. 3.

[27] "Actions, Reasons, and Causes," *op. cit.* p. 10.

[28] Chapter four contains detailed discussions of Hume's view of judgments about moral responsibility.

[29] Alvin I. Goldman, "What is justified belief," in Kornblith's Naturalizing *Epistemology* (1994),

p. 105.
[30] Davidson (1980: 8).
[31] Davidson, *ibid.*
[32] Davidson (1980: 4). His typical examples of primary reasons include "pro-attitudes" such as "desires, wantings, urges, promptings" together with the beliefs of the agent (p. 4).
[33] Davidson, *ibid.* p. 4-5. I think the primary reason must be stated that "I flipped the switch with the desire or intention of turning on the light to illuminate the room."
[34] Davidson, *ibid.*
[35] Michael Woods, "Reasons for Action and Desire." *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society,* Supplementary Volume 1972, p. 189.
[36]Michael Smith (1995), p. 95.
[37] Smith, *ibid.,* p. 95.
[38] Smith, 95.
[39] See Chapter 5 of his *The Moral Problem* (1995).
[40] Smith, 93.
[41] Brink 1989: 39.
[42] Brink, 46.
[43] Brink, *ibid.*
[44] Brink, 46.
[45] Among the different species of internalism that Brink discusses include what he calls "agent internalism," "appraiser internalism," and "hybrid internalism" (p. 40). According to his definition, agent internalism draws a conceptual connection between *moral obligation* and moral motivation or compliance; appraiser internalism *connects moral beliefs or moral judgments* conceptually with the motivation or moral reasons of the moral appraiser; and hybrid internalism plays a conceptual connection between a *recognition of moral obligation* and moral motivation or reasons for action. (See Brink, pp. 40-41.)
[46]An example of a sociopath, which is often cited in discussions of conceptual relation between morality and motivation, is the story of Robert Harris. Harris claims that he knew fully well that what he was doing was wrong yet he chose to do it any way without feeling any conflict between his moral knowledge his action.
[47] Brink, 48, 49.
[48] Consider Smith's agreement with Brink. "Now Brink think that ...inverted commas response doesn't take amoralist challenge 'seriously' enough. And I must confess that I share his misgivings.... For as Brink points out, there seems to be nothing incoherent about the idea of amoralist who claims to have special insight into what is *really* right and wrong; an amoralist whose judgments about what is right and wrong to do are therefore, even by her own lights, out of line with the judgments of others" (Smith, 168).
[49] The cases that Smith critically examines include an example from Harry Frankfurt, who asks us to imagine a heroine addict who "...hates his addiction and always struggles desperately, although to no avail, against its thrust. He tries everything that he thinks might enable him to overcome his desires for the drug. But these desires are too powerful for him to withstand, and invariably, in the end, they conquer him. He is an unwilling addict, helplessly violated by his own desires" Smith (1995: 134). Smith takes the quote from Frankfurt (1971: 87).
[50] For example, the cases of psychological imbalances that Smith cites to shore his argument up is not endorsed by Brink.
[51] Smith (1995), 130. In defending his argument, Smith contends that anti-Humeans, such as Thomas Nagel (1970), John Mcdowell (1978), and Mark Platt (`1979), reject Humean theory of motivating reasons simply because they fail to recognize a distinction between motivating reasons and "other sorts of reasons," especially, normative reasons. Smith argues also that those who reject Humean theory of motivating reasons do so simply because "they have an inadequate conception of desire,

or because they overlook the implications of the fact that reason explanation are teleological" (Smith 93).

[52] Smith (1995), pp. 130-31.

[53] Smith, 130.

[54] Smith, 130.

[55] Smith, 151. Smith's rationalist theory of normative reasons coincides with a similar view that Brink endorses. Compare Smith's theory, grounded in the rationality of a fully rational agent, with Brink's similar account in this passage. "[G]ood or justifying reasons for action will presumably explain an agent's actions *insofar as she is fully rational* and so will constitute explanatory reasons for action for a fully rational agent, since one is rational, in this sense, simply insofar as one recognizes and acts on good or justifying reasons for action" (Brink 1989: 39, Brink's emphasis). The two differ on their accounts by the fact that Brink defends the theory from an external realist position, as contrasted with the internal realist position adopted by Smith.

[56] Smith: 151.

[57] Smith, 130.

[58] Smith, 130.

[59] Adrian M. S. Piper, "Hume on Rational Final Ends." *Philosophy Research Archives* (1988-89); Jean Hampton, "Does Hume have an Instrumental Conception of Practical Reason?" *Hume Studies*, April 1995; Michael Smith, "An Anti-Humean Theory of Normative Reasons," in his *The Moral Problem* (1995); Christine Korsgaad, "Skepticism about Practical Reason." *The Journal of Philosophy*, January, 1986.

[60] Christine M. Korsgaad, "Skepticism about Practical Reason" *op. cit., p.* 5.

[61] Korsgaad, *ibid.*, p. 6.

[62] See Adrian M. S. Piper (1988-89), p. 1.

[63] Piper, p. 2. The full story of Rawl's Neurotic man runs as follows. "imagine someone whose only pleasure is to count blades of grass in various geometrically shaped areas such as part squares and well-trimmed lawns. He is otherwise intelligent and actually possesses unusual skills, since he manages to survive by solving difficult mathematical problems for a fee…[T]he good for this man is indeed counting blades of grass, or more accurately, his good is determined by a plan that gives an especially prominent place to this activity….Perhaps he is peculiarly neurotic and in early life acquired an aversion to human fellowship, and so he counts blades of grass to avoid having to deal with other people." (John Rawls. *A Theory of Justice*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971, p. 432.)

[64] Piper, p. 194. He takes the Howard Hughes' story from Bartlett and Steele, *Empire: The Life, Legend, and Madness of Howard Hughes. New York: WW. Norton and Co., 1979.*

[65] I draw my account closely from a similar insightful position defended by Fred Wilson in a section of his book titled, "Hume's Cognitive Stoicism." See his *Hume's Defense of Causal Inference*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997, pp. 193ff.

[66] Wilson, *ibid.*,193.

[67] As we shall see in chapter four, the interpretation was initiated by Norman Kemp-Smith.

[68] Wilson, *ibid.*

[69] David Pears. *Hume's System: An Examination of the First Book of the 'Treatise'*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 99.

[70] Wilson *op. cit.* p. 193.

[71] See Hume's *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, Section XII.

[72] Wilson *op. cit. p. 194.*

[73] Wilson *op. cit.*

[74] Wilson *op. cit.*

[75] I must mention also that my response will not deal with Brink's amoralism problem; this is an issue that I will let it pass as a fundamental moral problem that challenges any internalist theory

that sees morality as intrinsically motivating, such as that of Hume's. I reserve my comments on the problem, especially, on the challenges of Hume's sensible knave, until my discussion of collective intentionality and cooperative moral behavior in chapter six. We shall see that the amoralist, just as the sensible knave, censors himself from his membership of *our* community by insisting on his unilateral interests and practices above (and to the violation of) our mutually invented general standards to enforce cooperative moral behavior. Hume actually wrestled with a form of the amoralism problem in his discussions of the challenges of the "sensible knave" both in the *Enquiry* and the *Treatise* (see E. 282ff; T. 479ff).

[76] Piper 1988-89: 197.

[77] Hume's distinction between probabilistic and causal reasoning is a bit fussy. We see a distinction between the two in Book 1, Part III, Section XI of the *Treatise*, but in Section II, probabilistic and causal reasoning collapses into each another (See Adrian Piper: 1988-89, p. 196).

[78] Hume's own instrumentalist conception of abstract or mathematical reasoning may be gleaned from the following passage. "Mathematics, indeed, are useful in all mechanical operations, and arithmetic in almost every art and profession: But 'tis not of themselves they have any influence. Mechanics are the art of regulating the motions of bodies *to some design'd or purpose*; and the reason why we employ arithmetic in fixing the proportions of numbers, is only that we may discover the proportions of their influence and operation. A merchant is desirous of knowing the sum total of his accounts with any person: Why? but that he may learn what sum will have the same *effects* in paying his debt, and going to market, as all the particular articles taken together. Abstract or demonstrative reasoning, therefore, never influences any of our actions, but only as it directs our judgment concerning causes and effects; which leads us to the second operation of the understanding" (T. 413-14).

[79] Piper, p. 197.

[80] Piper, pp. 197 and 194.

[81] Hampton acknowledges the view that Kantian theory of practical reason is troublesome, scientifically and practically. But she rejects also the idea that Hume's theory of reason is reflective of the commonsense view. She argues that Hume's view of reason, fundamentally, "defies common-sense" (Hampton 1995: 57). She even denies the view that Hume has a plausible theory of instrumental reason (see p. 57).

[82] As Hampton argues, "for Hume, who wanted to be the Newton of the science of Man, it was important to put forward a conception of reason that grants it no occult powers, and that presupposes a foundation that is utterly acceptable from scientific point of view" (Hampton 1995: 58-59).

[83] Hampton (1995), p. 58. Hampton posited the remarks as a rejection of Kantian non-instrumental theory of practical reason. But as we shall see, she defends a Kantian instrumental version to displace Humean instrumental theory of practical reason.

[84] Hampton (1995), p. 58).

[85] Defending a similar view, Hampton argues for the point in the following way: "the instrumental view [of practical reason] has been popular with naturalists and social scientists generally, because it seems not only a highly plausible answer to the question 'why be rational?' but one that is acceptable to naturalists insofar as it does not appear to rely on some kind of 'mystical' force which human beings are supposed to have the capacity to sense, and be motivated by" (Hampton 1995: 62).

[86] The general conception is that instrumental theory of rationality is a theory about motivating reasons, that is, reasons that tell only the efficient means of maximizing our ends. On Bertrand Russell's view, instrumental "'reason' has a perfectly clear and precise meaning. It signifies the choice of the right means to an end that you wish to achieve. It has nothing whatever to do with the choice of ends" (See his *Human Society in Ethics and Politics*. London: Allen and Unwin, 1954, p. viii.) Herbert Simon also maintains: "Reason is wholly instrumental. It cannot tell us

where to go; at best it can tell us how to get there. It is a gun for hire that can be employed in the service of any goals we have, good or bad." (See his *Reason in Human Affairs*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1983, pp. 7-8.

[87] As Elijah Millgram writes: "When it comes to talking about practical reasoning, 'Humeans' is synonym for 'instrumentalist.'" (Elijah Milgram (1995), p. 75.

[88] "According to the stronger claim [of motivating reasons]," Smith maintains, "the claim that is, as I understand it, crucial to the Humean theory--motivation has its source in the presence of a relevant desire and means-end belief" (Smith, 92).

[89] Jean Hampton (1995), 61.

[90] Hampton, *ibid.*

[91] As Hampton puts it in reference to Kant, "a careful look at his account of the force of hypothetical imperatives shows he believes we are motivated to follow them *not* by the desires assumed by such imperatives, but by *reason*--that is, by the instrumental (and not the moral) component of reason" (Hampton, p. 61).

[92] Immanuel Kant. *Foundation of the Metaphysics of Morals*. Lewis White Beck (tr.). Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1959, p. 33.

[93] Immanuel Kant. *Critique of Practical Reason*, Third Edition. Lewis White Beck (tr.). Upper Saddle River, NJ.: Prentice Hall, 1993, p. 123.

[94] Kant, *Foundation,* p. 34.

[95] Hampton 1995: 57.

[96] Hampton 1995: 65.

[97] Hampton 1995: 57; emphasis supplied.

[98] I will defend the argument in my discussion of Humean view of intersubjective values in chapter six.

[99] I doubt whether it really makes a difference whether we say that moral assertions are about truths or about rightness. Truths are about the content of propositions, but the concept of rightness is about action states. When I say "X is right," and when I say, "Y is true," I may be making evaluative judgments about two different objects, the first an appraisal of an action or a character, but the second an appraisal of a proposition. But both statements are made with the same purpose (declaration of evaluative judgments), though in a different language.

[100] As Norton has correctly captured, in virtue of its ability to calculate and predict the consequences of actions, Hume believed that in some circumstances, "reason informs us that our desired end is unattainable or would be harmful" (Norton, 1993: 163).

[101] David McNaughton. *Moral Vision: An Introduction to Ethics*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1988, *p*. 21.

[102] Hume's consideration of moral philosophy as a practical discourse is spelled out in the following declaration to his agreement with the *status quo*. "Philosophy is commonly divided into *speculative and practical*; and as morality is always comprehended under the latter division, 'tis supposed to influence our passions and actions" (T. 457, Hume's emphasis).

[103] As David Fate Norton put it, on Hume's view, "reason may be subservient to the passions, but the service it offers is essential to morality. Our desires, we might say, give us certain goals, but reason, because only it can inform us of the relations of cause and effects, is required to direct the desires to their goals" (Norton 1993: 163).

[104] *Treatise,* Book II, Part III, Section III, p. 413; emphasis added.

[105] Here is the full passage. "Disputes with men, pertinaciously obstinate in their principles, are, of all others, the most irksome.... Those who have denied the reality of moral distinctions, may be ranked among the disingenuous disputants.... There has been a controversy started of late, much better worth examination, concerning the general foundation of Morals; whether they be derived from Reason, or from sentiment.... The ancient philosophers, though they often affirm, that virtue is nothing but conformity to reason, yet, in general, seem to consider morals as deriving from taste and sentiment. On the other hand, our modern enquirers, though they also talk

much of the beauty of virtue, and deformity of vice, yet have commonly endeavoured to account for these distinctions by metaphysical reasonings, and by deductions from the most abstract principles of the understanding. Such confusion reined in these subjects, that an opposition of the greatest consequence could prevail between one system and another, and even in the parts of almost each individual system; and yet nobody, till very lately, was ever sensible of it. The elegant Lord Shaftsbury, who first gave occasion to remark this distinction, and who, himself, is not entirely free from the same confusion. It must be acknowledged, that both sides of the question are susceptible of specious arguments" (E. 169-171).

[106] For discussions on various forms of normativity, see Alvin Plantinga (1992). Hilary Kornblith (1994) also has a detailed discussion on different positions on the issue of normativity.

[107] Nicholas Rescher, "Lawfulness as Mind-Dependent," in *Essays in Honor of Carl G. Hempel*. Nicholas Rescher (ed.). Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1969, pp. 178-179.

[108] Fred Wilson defends this view forcibly in Part 2 of his *Hume's Defense of Causal Inference* (1997).

[109] Fred Wilson (1997), 196.

Chapter 4

[1] As P. S. Ardal puts it, "Many recent commentators agree that Hume thought that there are moral sentiments. But this agreement does not take us very far, because there is a variety of opinion about the nature of these sentiments and the place to be allotted to them in accounting for the nature of moral evaluation." (P. S. Ardal, "Another Look at Hume's Account of Moral Evaluation" in *David Hume: Critical Assessments*. Volume IV. Stanley Tweyman (ed.). London/New York: Routledge, 1995, p. 79.)

[2] The notions of "moral character" and "moral dispositions" can be separated but I will not draw a distinction between the two in this paper.

[3] Jean Hampton (1997) and Paul Russell (1995) criticize Hume on the issue.

[4] Defending the biological underpinning of Hume's moral theory, a Humean movement has emerged that interprets Hume as anticipating Darwin's evolutionary ethics. Stephen Ball (1995: 137), for example, argues that "Hume very straightforwardly anticipates Darwin by stressing the role of biology in shaping moral emotions...." Terence Penelhum (1993: 124) also argues that, "Hume's view of our [source] of beliefs is essentially a Darwinian view." Michael Ruse (1990: 159) also maintains that Hume's moral philosophy is "a far more precursor" of Darwinian ethics, for "his is a naturalistic approach to ethics that a Darwinian understands and appreciates."

[5] This is the basis of Paul Russell's interpretation of Hume's conception of moral character as involuntary in nature (See Chapter 9 of his *Freedom and Moral Sentiment, op. cit.)*

[6] Paul Russell (1995), p. 131.

[7] Harry Frankfurt (1982).

[8] Hume's theory of the passions in book two of the *Treatise* was a prelude to his full construction of his moral theory in the third book. Consider his declaration, when introducing the third book that, in devoting to the full study of morality, he titled "of Morals." "I am not without hopes, that the present system of philosophy will acquire new force as it advances; and that our reasonings concerning *morals* will corroborate whatever has been said concerning the *understanding* and the passions" (T. 455). Hume's allusions to the "*understanding*" and the "*passions*" refer to the first and second books of the *Treatise*, respectively. He was establishing continuity between the three books that together constitute the *Treatise*.

[9] Especially, see his *A Dissertation on The Passions* in vol. 4 of his *Works* edited by T. H. Green and T. H. Grose (1964). The paper can be found also in his letters, edited by J. E. T. Greig 2 vols. (1932; repr. 1969). Of course, it can also be found in his *Enquiry* and in book two of the *Treatise*.

[10] For, I consider the works contained in the *Treatise* as representative of his official thought.

[11] According to his classification, perceptions include ideas and impressions; impressions include

sensations and reflections; reflections include calm and violent impressions (Book II. I. I, pp. 275-76).

[12] He refers to Book I. Part I. Sect. 2 of the *Treatise.*

[13] Pall Ardal (1966), pp. 7-11.

[14] Penelhum (1993), p. 126.

[15] Hume was wrong in his description of anger as having no reference to any specific object. Anger is a feeling of animosity towards an object of one's experience. The anger is baseless if it has no specific object of reference.

[16] I do not want to be misunderstood as claiming that Hume conceived the original passions purely as bodily physiological phenomena. As I am trying to establish, though Hume regarded the original passions as psychological features of the mind, he nevertheless considered them as biological phenomena as well.

[17] I am claiming that for Hume, the mind, including the passions that he identified as original, are of course, innate. But I am not claiming that the contents of the mind are innate. An innate faculty is not the same as innate ideas. Following Locke, Hume thought the content of the mind is filled by experience. So for both Hume and Locke, the mind is innate, but its contents are not. However, for Hume, the contents of the mind include *impressions*, not only ideas, as Locke thought.

[18] Given their biological or physiological nature, Hume argued that the original passions have physical causes (origin). In his words, "'Tis certain, that the mind, in its perceptions, must begin somewhere; there must be some impressions, which without any introduction make their appearance in the soul. As these depend upon natural and physical causes, the examination of them wou'd lead me too far from my present subject into the sciences of anatomy and natural philosophy" (T. 275-276).

[19] By this, I imply the view that the secondary passions do not have an independent existence, besides the primary passions. They are the foundation of the secondary passions.

[20] T. 280; cf. 286.

[21] *Enquiry* 301, emphasis added.

[22] It needs to be noted that for Hume, beside mathematical and pure logical conclusions, all judgments of facts (including moral judgments) are caused by feelings. As he argued, "'Tis not solely in poetry and music, we must follow our taste and sentiment, but likewise in philosophy…When I give the preference to one set of arguments above another, I do nothing but decide from feeling concerning the superiority of their influence" (T. 103). We are felt (caused) to judge in a particular way according to our habit (how through our epistemic practices we have constantly been approving or disapproving objects similar to the one we are now judging.

[23] Consider Hume's remarks regarding the need for self-criticism and critical examination of our perceptions: "Let our first belief be never so strong, it must infallibly perish by passing through so many new examinations, of which each diminishes somewhat of its force and vigour. When I reflect on the natural fallibility of my judgements, I have less confidence in my opinions which I reason; and when I proceed still further, to turn the scrutiny against every successive estimation I make of my faculties, all the rules of logic requires a continual diminution" (T183).

[24] Some accounts may consider the cat's behavior as an event, but not an action. But in Hume's compatibilist theory, there is no relevant distinction between actions and events. For a rejection of distinction between actions and events, see Donald Davidson's paper "Actions, Reasons and Causes," in his *Essays on Actions and Events* (1980).

[25] I am not by this illustration implying the view that actions originating from our original human nature have no moral meaning. I only use the example to illustrate a distinction between moral and non-moral actions.

[26] Consider the argument in this way. Hume believed that, given our common biological nature as sentient creatures, the human and non-human animals are different only in terms of degrees (i.e.,

in terms of different degrees of thinking abilities), but not different in kinds. As he argued in Section XVI, Part III of the first book of the *Treatise titled "Of the Reason of Animals*," "no truth appears to me more evident, than that beasts are endow'd with thought and reason as well as men" (T. 176). Hume's illustration involved his admiration for the sagacity of some animals regarding the choices they make towards their self-preservation. Regarding what he described as "extra-ordinary instances of sagacity" of animals, Hume wrote, "a bird, that chooses with such care and nicety the place and materials of her nest, and sits upon her eggs for a due time, and in a suitable season, with all the precaution that a chymist is capable of in his most delicate projection, furnishes us with a lively instance..." (T. 177).

[27] Our biological programming seems also to be more complex than that of other animals.

[28] Henry Frankfurt's "Freedom of the Will" (1988), and Daniel Dennett's "Elbow Room" (1984), especially, ch. 4

[29] Russell p. 130.

[30] Frankfurt, *Journal of Philo*sophy, 1971. This paper is reprinted in Gary Watson (ed.). *Free Will*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982.

[31] I am assuming that the person has only one choice in the two conflicting desires.

[32] Frankfurt, p. 82.

[33] Frankfurt, p. 82.

[34] Frankfurt 1982: 82.

[35] Frankfurt, p. 82. Hume defended a similar idea that non-human animals not only share with us passions but they also have a will. He believed that "every animal...has sense, appetite, and will." (T. 468).

[36] Charles Taylor 1982: 112.

[37] Frankfurt 1982: 83; emphasis added.

[38] It must be clarified that first order capacities need not always be biological dispositions; they can be weak capacities that are formed through bad habituation and addictions. That is, our ability to subject our immediate desires and inclinations to criticisms may be eroded by an addiction that we have acquired through our own practices or through the way we were brought up. It may be asked: where do the sentiments that are shaped by social and other environmental factors fit in the first-order and second-order classification? It is hard to classify socially determined character in the distinction. It is not a natural (original) psychological disposition since it has been restructured. But it appears not also to belong to the class of second-order passions if we define second-order passions as self-developed dispositions that emerge from reflective self-evaluation, as Frankfurt conceives it. Socially determined character traits then seem to belong to a different level other than the first-order and second-order desires classification. This problem suggests that identification of different levels of desires is possible: there can be first, second, third, etc. order desires. This makes the classification somewhat arbitrary because it seems not to be based on a any definite (specific) criterion. In my extrapolation of the distinction to respond to the issue whether Hume construed moral character as moral dispositions over which we have no control, I will stick to Frankfurt's classification.

[39] Charles Taylor, "Responsibility for Self." In A. O. Rorty. *The Identities of Persons*. Berkeley, etc.: University of California Press, 1969, 281.

[40] Taylor, 281.

[41] Taylor, 282.

[42] Harman (2000), 35-36.

[43] Penelhum, 126.

[44] John Immerwahr has rightly observed that, "At the centre of many of Hume's discussions is a recurring conviction about the nature of human well-being and the means of obtaining it. This insistence, which can be found in each stage of Hume's career and in writings on virtually every topic, provides one way of finding an overarching unity to his thought. Many of Hume's

investigations are informed by his early distinction between calm and violent passions. Wherever we turn, we find Hume insisting that people are happiest and governments are most stable when emotional calmness prevails. Hume also has a strategy which is designed to 'tranquilize and soften' the passions. The strategy also becomes a stylistic principle which informs Hume's own writing, especially his popular works." (John Immerwahr. "Hume on Tranquilizing the Passions," in Stanley Tweyman vol. IV 1995, 332. On Hume's view that the passions need to be tranquilized and softened, Immerwahr refers us to Hume's essay, "Of the Sceptic," in Hume's *Works* vol. 3., 229n.

[45] Penelhum (1993), p. 127.

[46] Though Hume identified calm sentiments with the mental dispositions that he distinguished as secondary or reflective impressions, he was not always consistent with this classification. He seemed not to be exactly sure of where to classify "calm" and "violent" passions in his division of the impressions into sensations and reflections. For a discussion of Hume's concept of the calm passions and the problem of its classification, see Pall S. Ardal, *Passion and Value in Hume's* Treatise (1966). In the discussion, I follow Pall Ardal and Terence Penelhum's suggestion that Hume preferred the latter classification: he generally associated calm passions with reflective impressions and violent passions with immediate sensations or primary (original) impressions. (See Ardal 1966: chapter 5, cf. pp. 8-9; Terence Penelhum 1993: 126-127.)

[47] Hume's identification of the calm and violent passions in terms of their force or intensity, it must be clarified, is not clear-cut or absolute. On occasion or circumstance, a passion that was manifested in one time as calm disposition may be experienced in another as violent. Hume emphasized this clarification in his letter to Francis Hutcheson in November 1742: He wrote: "These instincts you mention seem not always to be violent and impetuous, more than self-love or benevolence. There is a calm Ambition, a calm Anger or Hatred, which tho' calm may likewise be very strong and have the absolute command over the Mind."(David Hume. *The Letter of David Hume,* H. Greig (ed.). Volume 1. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1932,pp. 19, 46. Quoted in Ardal 1966, p. 94.)

[48] Ardal 1966, p. 9.

[49] These descriptions are scattered in many places of his writings, but see especially his essay, "Of the delicacy of Taste and Passions," in his *Works* vol. 3, pp. 93-94.

[50] This passage is one of the places where Hume distinguished between passions and emotions. He was not clear about the exact way in which the two differ

[51] On Hume's thought, the stable disposition of the mind that gives us the ability to control and redirect our immediate passions is nothing but calm passions. He believed that morality requires of us to redirect and calm down the manifestations of the brute (original) passions because, on his observation, the uncultivated impulses (passions) manifest themselves irregularly. They are not directed by any steady principle. In its original nature, Hume argued, "'its impossible for the mind to fix itself steadily upon one idea for any considerable time; nor can it by its utmost efforts ever arrive at such a constancy" (T. 283). What Hume meant was that, "'its difficult for the mind, when actuated by any passion, to confine itself to that passion alone, without any change or variation" (283). This reveals that "human nature is too inconstant to admit of any such regularity. For, changeableness is essential to it" (T. 283).

[52] This claim does not imply the view that calm disposition is sufficient by itself to guarantee the agent with intrinsic happiness. As we shall see in chapter six, sociability, conformity to general rules, social expectations and platitudes are all part of the network of conditions that Hume outlined as required for a worthwhile living.

[53] Immerwahr, 337.

[54] See particularly his *Essays, Moral, Political and Literary.* Revised edition by Eugene F. Miller. Indianapolis, 2987; p. 551, cf. 554.

[55] See his "The Delicacy of Taste and Passions" in his *Works* 3: 91.

[56] Notice how Hume defended the point. "All men, it is allowed, are equally desirous of happiness; but few are successful in the pursuit. One considerable cause is the want of strength of mind, which might enable them to resist the temptation of present ease or pleasure, and carry them forward in the search of more distant profit and enjoyment" (E. 239).

[57] Immerwahr, 336.

[58] In what follows, I draw on Terence Penelhum's helpful discussion of Hume's view of human's freedom and their capacity to choose. See his, Hume's "Moral Psychology," 1993, pp. 123ff.

[59] Penelhum 1993, p. 125.

[60] Penelhum 1993, p. 125.

[61] A full account of Hume's view of the role of reason in moral life is not my present concern. I am only concerned with a misconception regarding how he analyzed the motivational function of passions in moral life.

[62] For an illuminating discussion that, in his philosophical system, Hume did not undermine but refined and defended our commonsense beliefs about morality and science, see Nicholas Capaldi (1975). See also, David Fate Norton (1982; 1995); P. S. Ardal (1995).

[63] This idea is supported by cases when some people, after having gone through certain emotional experiences such as the break-up of a relationship, are able to "move on" with their lives.

[64] Hume's reference to the "the late philosopher applies to Butler. (See John P. Wright "Butler and Hume on Habit and Moral Character" (1994).

[65] T. 494, Hume's emphasis; see also T. 495. He restated the same idea in a more elaborate form. "Men being naturally selfish, or endow'd only with a confined generosity, they are not easily induc'd to perform any action for the interest of strangers, except with a view to some reciprocal advantage, which they had no hope of obtaining except by such a performance" (T. 519).

[66] Consider Hume's argument in the following passage. "When objects of any kind are first presented to the eye or imagination, the sentiment which attends them, is obscure and confused; and the mind is, in a great measure, incapable of pronouncing concerning their merits or defects. The taste cannot perceive the several excellences of the performance; much less distinguish the particular character of each excellence, and ascertain its quality and degree.... But allow him to acquire experience in those objects, his feeling becomes more exact and nice: He not only perceives the beauties and defects of its part, but marks the distinguishing species of each quality, and assigns it suitable praise or blame. A clear and distinct sentiment attends him through the whole survey of the objects; and he discerns that very degree and kind of approbation or displeasure, which each part is naturally fitted to produce.... The organ acquires greater perfection in its operations; and can produce, without danger of mistake, concerning the merits of every performance. In a word, the same address and dexterity, which practice gives to the execution of any work, is also acquired by the same means, in the judging of it." (David Hume, *Of the Standard of Taste,* 274-75.)

[67] *Of the Standard of Taste, 276.*

[68] Morality requires of us to be impartial in our judgment and decisions that affect and involve others, despite the force and appeals of our immediate personal relations and attachments. Hume illustrated the argument this way. "Our servant, if diligent and faithful, may excite stronger sentiments of love and kindness than *Marcus Brutus*, as represented in history; but we say not upon that account, that the former character is more laudable than the latter. We know, that were we to approach equally near that renown'd patriot, he wou'd command a much higher degree of affection and admiration" (T 582). In his view, we blame equally a bad action, which we read of in history, with one perform'd in our neighbourhood t'other day: The meaning of which is, that we know from reflexion, that the former action wou'd excite as strong sentiments of approbation as the latter, were it plac'd in the same position" (584).

[69] *Of the Standard of Taste,* 276.

[70] I make this claim with caution, because Hume was ambiguous on the issue. In one sense, he

believed that the ability for imaginative judgment across borders is very limited. Consider one of his arguments. "It is but a weak subterfuge...to say, we transport our selves by the force of imagination, into distance ages and countries, and consider the advantage, which we should have reaped from those characters, had we been contemporaries, and had nay commerce with the persons. It is not conceivable, how a *real* sentiment or passion can ever arise from a known *imaginary* interest; especially when our *real* interest is still kept in view, and is often acknowledged to be entirely distinct from the imaginary, and even sometimes opposite to it" (E 217). Consider Hume's other claim that seems to contradict the preceding view. And tho' this advantage or harm [we approve of or condemn in moral judgments] be often very remote from ourselves, yet sometimes 'tis very near us, and interests us strongly by sympathy...The case is here the same as in our judgments concerning external bodies. All objects seem to diminish by their distance: But tho' the appearance of objects to our senses be the original standard, by which we judge of them, yet we do not say, that they actually diminish by the distance; but correcting the appearance by reflexion, arrive at a more constant and established judgment concerning them. In like manner, tho' sympathy be much fainter than our concern for ourselves, and a sympathy with persons remote from us much fainter than that with persons near and contiguous; yet we neglect all the differences in our calm judgments concerning the characters of men" (T 603).

[71] Properly trained and well informed, Hume believed that characters that are far and remote from us can nevertheless attract our approbation and condemnation. "The notion of morals...also implies some sentiment, so universal and comprehensive as to extend to all mankind, and render that actions and conduct, even of the persons the most remote, an object of applause or censure, according as they agree or disagree with that rule of right which is establish'd" (E272). Even a repugnant behaviour far distant from us that has no consequence to us nevertheless has a tendency to attract our condemnation. "We frequently bestow praise or virtuous actions, performed in very distant ages and remote countries; where the utmost subtlety of imagination would not discover any appearance of self-interest, or find any connexion of our present happiness and security with events so widely separate from us" (E 215-16).

[72] *Of the Standard of Taste,* 276.

[73] David Hume, "Standard of Taste," p. 275.

[74] In *David Hume: The Philosophical Works*. T. H. Green and T. H. Grose (eds.), vol. 3. 1963. I will simply refer to this work as "*Taste.*"

[75] *Taste,* 274.

[76] Bertrand Russell, "The Value of Philosophy," in *The Experience of Philosophy*, Fourth Edition. Daniel Kolak and Raymond Martin (eds.). Belmont, etc: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1999, p. 36.

[77] Barbara Herman, "Morality and Everyday Life." *Proceeding and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association.* Volume 74, Issue 2, (November 2000), p. 31.

[78] By accustoming ourselves to any Course of Action, we get an Aptness to go on, a Facility, Readiness and often Pleasure, in it. The Inclinations which rendered is averse to it, grow weaker: the Difficulties in it, not only imaginary but real ones, lessen: the Reasons for it, offer themselves of course to our Thoughts upon all Occasions: and the least Glimpse of them is sufficient to make us go on, in a Course of Action, to which we have been accustomed. (Joseph Butler's *Works* edited by S. Halifax, 1874, vol. 1, p. 91; quoted by Wright, 1994, p. 108.)

[79] Francis Hutcheson. *Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions*, p. 30.

[80] The principles, in this sense, are experientially based; they are acquired through reflective practices and habits. As we noted, Hume considered it as misleading to attribute to the manifestations of reason every principled way of life. On his thought, a principled way of life is a cultivated lifestyle or character through self-reflective practices or habituation, not reasoning. As he argued: "To consider the matter alright, reason is nothing but a wonderful and unintelligible instinct in our souls, which carries us along a certain train of ideas, and endows them with

particular qualities, according to their particular situations and relations. This instinct, 'its true, arises from past observation and experience. But can any one give the ultimate reason, why past experience and observation produces such an effect, any more than why nature alone should produce it? Nature may certainly produce whatever can arise from habit. Nay, habit is nothing but one of the principles of nature, and derives all its force from that origin" (T. 174).

[81] Herman (2000), p. 34.

Chapter 5

[1] *Mind*, 14, 1905; pp. 149-173 & 335-347. Smith's paper has been reprinted in many places. In my discussion, I am using the recent reprinted edition in *David Hume: Critical Assessments*. Stanley Tweyman (ed.). London &New York: Routledge, 1995, pp. 207-229. Unless I specify otherwise, all my references to Smith are from Tweyman's reprinted edition.

[2] The received interpretation of Hume as a purely negative philosopher whose primary philosophical task involved an effort to reduce the philosophy of his predecessors to *absurdum* originates from Thomas Reid, Hume's intellectual contemporary. (Reid's *Works*, edited by Sir William Hamilton, vol. i, p. 91; also quoted in Kemp Smith (1960), p. 7. Immanuel Kant was the first to register his protest against Reid's interpretation. He argued, "But Hume suffered the misfortune of metaphysicians, of not being understood. It is positively painful to see how utterly his opponents, Reid, Oswald, Beattie, and lastly Priestly, missed the point of the problem; for while they were ever taking for granted that which he doubted, and demonstrating with zeal and often with impudence that which he never thought of doubting, they so misconstrued his valuable suggestion that everything remained in its old condition, as if nothing had happened." (Immanuel Kant. *Prolegomena*. Translated by The Paul Carus and revised by J. W. Ellington. Indianapolis: Hacket Publishing Company, 1977, sec. 259, p. 4.)

[3] On orthodox reading, Hume was "a purely negative philosopher--the arch skeptic whose primary aim and achievement was to reduce the theories of his predecessors to the absurdity that was implicitly contained in them all along." (Barry Stroud. *Hume*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977, p. 1. See also Norman Kemp Smith. *The Philosophy of David Hume*. London: Macmillan & Co Ltd, 1960, p. 3f.)

[4] I must point out that the concept of "character" is a loose term in Hume's moral philosophy. He sometimes used the notion of character to describe the moral status or virtue of a person. But in other places, he used the notion of character to refer to specific traits such as honesty, intelligence, and benevolence. For a comprehensive discussion of Hume's ambiguous references to the notion of character, see Annette C. Baier's "Contemplation of Character" in her book, *A Progress of Sentiments: Reflections on Hume's* Treatise. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991, especially p. 188.

[5] Paul Russell 1995: p. 95.

[6] His other references include the claim that "We are never to consider any single action in our enquiries concerning the origin of moral; but *only the quality or character from which the action proceeded. These alone are durable enough to affect our sentiments concerning the person.* Actions are, indeed, better indications of a character than words, or even wishes and sentiments; but 'tis only so far as they are such indications, that they are attended with love or hatred, praise or blame" (T. 575, my emphasis).

[7] See for example, Annette Baier (1991), especially chapter 8; Paul Russell (1995), especially chapters 6-12; Jane McIntyre (1990).

[8] However, there are recent Hume scholars who, in their defense of Hume's naturalism, in a way, disagree with the Smithian interpretation. Among these, include David Fate Norton (1982), John P. Wright (1983), and John Laird (1932, repr.1967). For example, Laird states his objection as follows: "While agreeing with much in Mr. Kemp Smith's important articles on `The Naturalism of Hume,' I cannot agree with Mr. Smith's `general conclusion' that `the thorough subordination

of reason to feeling and instinct' was `the determining factor in Hume's philosophy" (1967, p. 186). Robert J. Fogelin also denies the Smithian interpretation, but his argument is an effort to demonstrate that the interpretation of Hume as a naturalist itself is false. He rather tries to resurrect and defend orthodox account inherited from Thomas Reid that construes Hume as a radical skeptic, a view that Fogelin thinks cannot in any way be reconciled with the naturalistic interpretation of Hume. (Robert J. Fogelin. *Hume's Skepticism in the Treatise of Human Nature*. London, etc.: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985.)

[9] Smith, 238, footnote 16; my emphasis.

[10] Smith, 233.

[11] According to his argument, "Hume claims that we are responsible for those qualities of mind or character that affect others and ourselves in pleasurable or painful ways. Insofar as our action and deportment *express* our character, so to that extent we are accountable for it" (Russell 1995: 124).

[12] Russell,. p. 124.

[13] Russell, p. 5.

[14] Russell, p. 128.

[15] According to Hume's remarks, "No distinction is more usual in all systems of ethics, than that betwixt *natural abilities* and *moral virtues*. Whoever considers the matter accurately, will find, that a dispute upon this head wou'd be merely a dispute of words" (T. 606).

[16] According to his argument, "in the *Treatise*, as I have indicated, Hume takes up the issue of the involuntariness of moral character primarily in the context of discussing accountability for natural virtues. Hume rejects the suggestion that the distinction between natural abilities, such as intelligence and imagination, and moral virtues, such as courage and honesty, is to be accounted for in terms of the voluntary/involuntary distinction. The moral virtues and the natural abilities are both acquired involuntarily for the most part. It is, Hume says, 'almost impossible for the mind to change its character in any considerable article, or cure itself of passionate splenetic temper, when they are natural to it'...Our will has little influence over such mater. In this sense, natural abilities and moral virtues are on 'the same footing with bodily endowments'" (Russell, p. 125; Russell supports his interpretation with quotes from T. 608 and 606).

[17] Russell, 130, 131.

[18] Russell, 131. Russell illustrates the argument by supporting it with Thomas Nagel's examples that, on the theory of moral luck, "someone who was an officer in a concentration camp might have led a quiet life and harmless life if the Nazis had never come to power." or if the person had emigrated to Argentina before the Nazis did come to power" Nagel, "Moral Luck," p. 175, 182.

[19] Russell, p. 130.

[20] Thomas Nagel, "Moral Luck," in *Free Will*. Gary Watson (ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982, p. 177. The four lucks that Nagel discusses includes those that Russell adopts and discusses in the Humean context: "constitutive luck", "circumstantial luck", and the two kinds of "consequential lucks".

[21] The issue of consequential luck exemplifies the Gaugin's example that Bernard Williams discusses in his account of moral luck. In the case study, we are asked to consider a man who cared about his wife and family, but left them to pursue his dream of becoming a accomplished artist, something he believed he could not do, unless he went to Tahiti without them. As it turned out, be became a famous artist and his works gave pleasure and material for thought to many people. (Bernard William. "Moral Luck," 1981.)

[22] Nagel, *ibid.* p. 177.

[23] Nagel, 176, 177.

[24] "According to Hume's principles," Russell argues, "neither 'consequential' nor 'circumstantial' luck should have any influence on our moral sentiments" (p. 131). Concerning Hume's alleged response to the problem of consequential luck, Russell refers us to his (Hume's) view that moral sentiments are aroused by qualities of mind or character but not determined in any lasting way by

consequences of actions. To the problem of circumstantial luck, Russell maintains that Hume responded by arguing that moral judgments are about the "tendencies" of the qualities of a character but not about the particular circumstance of the moral agent. That is, Hume believed that variations in the circumstances that a person faces do not really alter the sentiments that a moral observer has towards the moral agent.

[25] Russell, p. 131.

[26] Russell, p. 130.

[27] Russell thinks Hume's objection to libertarian account of liberty in his compatibilist theory involved a rejection of the view that we have a control over our character or who we are.

[28] Russell, p. 30.

[29] Russell, 130.

[30] Russell, p. 130; Russell's emphasis.

[31] Russell, p. 130.

[32] Russell, *ibid.*

[33] Russell, *ibid*

[34] I am following Barbara Harman closely. (See her paper :"Morality and Everyday Life" (2000), p. 34.

[35] Harman, 34-35.

[36] The assessment is based on psychological experiments in which subjects were asked to rate how bad was a person's action. On a scale of 1-10, it is alleged that the driver who damaged the meter was graded about "4", but the driver who killed the child "10". As Catherine Wilson argues, the experiment supports the idea that morality is a gradient: people do not divide actions simply into the forbidden and the permitted: there is the sort of bad, the really bad, the terrible, and many intermediate grades. For a further support of the idea that moral assessments look like grading, see Herman, p. 34. I am indebted to Professor Catherine Wilson's lecture notes (Phil 450/500, 1996) for the truck driver example and the analysis of the psychological experiment.

[37] Herman, p. 35.

[38] Nagel 1982, p. 179.

[39] Kantian scholarship on the problem includes Bernard Williams, *Moral Luck*. London, etc.: Cambridge University Press, 1981; Thomas Nagel, "Moral Luck," in his *Mortal Questions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979.

[40] Herman, p. 35.

[41] Penelhum (1993), p. 129.

[42] Hume was profoundly optimistic about what he called "the creative power of the mind" (T. 84). It was based on his confidence in the power of the mind that led him to formulate his famous dictum that "the mind has great propensity to spread itself on external objects, and to conjoin with them any internal impression, which they occasion" (T. 167).

[43] Besides Hume, G. E. Moore is a historically best known figure for the interpretation of the view that "could have done otherwise entails "would have done otherwise." (See his *Ethics*, Home University Library, 1912, chapter 6.) For recent discussions on the interpretation, see Roderick M. Chisholm, "Human Freedom and the Self;" Bruce Aune, "Hypothetical and 'Can': Another Look;" Keith Lehrer, "Cans Without Ifs;" all in *Free Will*. Gary Watson (ed.), 1982.

[44] Chisholm (1982), p. 26.

[45] Penelhum (1993), p. 129.

[46] Peter Strawson, "Freedom and Resentment, in Gary Watson (ed.), 1982, p. 59.

[47] Strawson (1982), p. 59.

[48] Strawson (1982), p. 60.

[49] Penelhum (1993), p. 132.

[50] See the *Enquiry*, p. 228n.

[51] However, this does not resolve the problem of luck, since the fortunate has a greater chance of

success than the one who tries by his own might (effort). But, though we admire it, in Hume's thought actual success is not the basic factor we consider in judgments about moral responsibility; motive and intentions are given fundamental consideration.

[52] A problem with this view is that, it seems to imply the idea that we all posses the same virtues or character traits, which is false in Hume's own account.

[53] Hampton 1997: 88.

[54] Michael Smith (1995), p. 130.

[55] Ardal, "Hume's Account of Moral Evaluation" *op. cit.*, p. 92.

[56] Ardal, p. 92.

[57] Hume wrote: "If any *action* be either virtuous or vicious, 'tis only as a sign of some quality or character. It must depend upon *durable principles of the mind, which extend over the whole conduct, and enter into the personal character*. Actions themselves, not proceeding from any constant principle, have no influence on love or hatred, pride or humility, and consequently are never considered in morality" (T. 575, emphasis added).

[58] For a detailed discussion of Hume's conception of character traits as durable principles of the mind, see Jane L. McIntyre, "Character: A Humean Account." *History of Philosophy Quarterly*. Volume 7, Number 2, April 1990.

[59] Jane McIntyre, p. 194.

[60] Russell, p. 95.

[61] Russell, p. 95. He supports that argument by referring us to various passages in the *Treatise* and the *Enquiry* (such as, E. 86, 99; T. 261, 349, 412).

[62]Jane McIntyre, p. 194.

[63]Russell acknowledges this distinction, despite his denial of the view that character is a disposition we form out of our choices. He concedes that in Hume, there is a distinction between natural abilities and moral virtues--moral virtues are not direct products of natural abilities. He acknowledges Hume's view that moral virtues are, rather, directly produced by a self-cultivated virtuous moral disposition of character (*Ibid.* 95ff. see also p. 124.)

[64] Mental states, in Hume's view, is a dispositional capacity, which can be activated according to the vivaciousness or pleasant ideas and beliefs that we have about the objects of our desires. Hume believed that "any new object naturally gives a new direction to the spirits, and changes the disposition" (T. 99). But "when the mind fixes constantly, on the same objects, the disposition has a much longer duration" (T. 99). The mind is a dispositional capacity that can be activated into a particular psychological state (for example, to love or to hate) according to the pleasantness or uneasiness of the objects of our ideas. Section VIII, Part III of the first book of the *Treatise* contains Hume emphasis on the dispositional character of the mind. Consider some of his references to the mind as always in a dispositional state waiting to be stimulated. "All the operations of the mind depend in a great measure on its disposition, when it performs them, and according as the spirits are more or less elevated, and the attention more or less fix'd, the action will always have more or less vigour and vivacity" (T. 98). He concludes: "When therefore any object is presented, which elevates and enlivens the thought, every action, to which the mind applies itself, will be more strong and vivid, as long as that disposition continues" (T. 98). He emphasized: "The continuance of the disposition depends entirely on the objects about which the mind is employ'd" (T. 98-99). When conditioned to become a durable disposition, "it happens that when the mind is once enliven'd by a present impression, it proceeds to form a more lively idea of the related objects by a natural transition of the disposition from the one to the other" (T. 99).

[65] Hume explained in the following way how the individual could be the same person, despite the transformation of his character. "Whatever changes he [a person] endures, his several parts are still connected by the relation of causation" (*ibid.*). In both cases, what unites the changes into the same entity is the close successive connectedness of the transitions.

[66] See his *Fables of the Bees* (1714). Selections reprinted in D. D. Raphael, (ed.), *British*

Moralists, vol. 1.
[67]T. 521, cf. T. 500, 423, 578.
[68] I.e., politicians and moralists.

Chapter 6

[1] W. D. Falk, "Hume on Is and Ought" in *David Hume: Critical Assessments* Vol. IV. Stanley Tweyman (ed.), 1995, p. 551.
[2] W. D. Hudson (ed.), *The Is-Ought Question*. New York: St. Martin's Press 1969.
[3] For the scope of this paper, I will read the two remarks as consistently implying two formulations of the same argument, though some commentators deny this. (For an elaborate examination whether Hume was consistently saying the same thing in the two remarks, see Nicholas L. Sturgeon. "Moral Skepticism and Moral Naturalism in Hume's Treatise" 1998 (Unpublished.)
[4] *Treatise,* 468 (emphasis in the original).
[5] All the italics are Hume's emphases.
[6] For an overwhelming literature on the fact-value remarks, see the volumes of papers in W. D. Hudson's edited work, *The Is-Ought Question* (1969). Stanley Tweyman also lists 54 works in his bibliography on the fact-value remarks.
[7] Bernard Williams strongly advocates this view. He rebaptizes Hume's fact-value remarks or the so-called Hume's law as admirably implying an incommensurable gulf between science and ethics. See his "The Scientific and the Ethical," in P. K. Moser and J. D. Trout (eds.). *Contemporary Materialism: A Reader*. London &New York: Routledge, 1995. The paper is a revision from a chapter in his *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985. He argues in the same way in his other works such as "Ethics and the Fabric of the World," in Ted Honderich (ed.) 1985; "Ethical Consistency," in G. Sayre-McCord, 1988.
[8] The label, "non-cognitivism" generally involves the view that objective moral knowledge or truth is impossible. This idea is antithetical to cognitivists' belief that "judgements of morality are susceptible of truth and knowledge." See David Wiggins, "Cognitivism, Naturalism, and Normativity: A Reply to Peter Railton," in *Reality, Representation, and Projection*. John Haldane &Crispin Wright (eds.). New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993, p. 301.
[9] Anthony Flew, "On the Interpretation of Hume." *Philosophy*, vol. 38, 1963, pp. 178-182. For the quote, see W. D. Falk (1995), p. 551.
[10]The quote is from section two entitled "No-'ought-from-is', or the autonomy of ethics" of a paper entitled "The Nature of Ethics" (p. 423), which I cannot trace its author and publisher.
[11] Brink 1989, p. 145-46. Brink traces the history of the is/ought thesis to Hume: "At least since Hume, many philosophers have defended the existence of an inferential gap between moral and nonmoral claims commonly known as the is/ought gap" (Brink, p. 145).
[12] A. J. Ayer, *Language, Truth, and Logic*. Gollancz, 1936.
[13] For the term, "empirical naturalism" see Stephen Darwall, 1995, p. i.
[14] One may ask: what about the Humean expressivism that is currently advocated by Simon Blackburn that seems to endorse the non-cognitivism of the emotivists? In response, I think expressivism is an internalist moral theory that a Humean can accept without necessarily endorsing also non-cognitivism. In any case, it is not exactly clear whether Blackburn's expressivism is a non-cognitivist theory.
[15] This view is controversial. Alexander Rosenberg (1993) argues that, though the logical empiricists diverged from Hume's explanation of scientific terms and phenomena by causal analyses, Hume believed in something like verification principle that the positivists later championed. He writes: "According to Hume's theory, since a term names an idea, the meaning of a term is ultimately given by a set of impressions that cause the idea it names, and terms without such a pedigree are meaningless or noises. In effect this theory of meaning constitutes a criterion of cognitive significance indistinguishable from one of the positivists' earliest attempt to frame a

principle of verifiability" (Alexander Rosenberg 1993: 66). I think Rosenberg makes too much out of Hume's commitment to the theory of meaning, an issue that is greatly contested in Hume scholarship.

[16] The dual emotional significance of ethical assertions consists in the fact that they are used non-descriptively (a) to *express* (but not to *state* or *describe*) feelings about moral events or situations, and (b) in a suggestive way to evoke or command an action (Ayer, 142-143). Care must be taken not to confuse emotivism for subjectivism in virtue of its identification of the emotive functions of ethical judgments as expressions of feelings on the part of the speaker to arouse feelings of another person to command her into action. As we have seen from Ayer, the emotivists clearly distinguished their emotive ethical theory from subjective ethical theory. Ayer classified subjective ethical theory among descriptive ethical theories that he criticized for construing moral judgments as fact-stating claims.

[17] Patrick Mcgrath. *The Nature of Moral Judgment. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1967, p. 3.*

[18] Mcgrath, p. 21.

[19] After rejecting naturalistic subjectivism and ethical intuitionism, Ayer argued: "the correct treatment of ethical statements is afforded by a third theory [emotivism], which is wholly compatible with our radical empiricism" (Ayer, 141).

[20] A. E. Pitson, *op. cit.* p, 65. By "logical or analytic subjectivism," Pitson refers to a meta-ethical theory that holds the view that moral utterances "merely state that the speaker has certain feelings, or give expression to these feelings" (p. 65).

[21] Pitson, p. 65.

[22] Pitson *ibid.*

[23] Iris Murdoch, *Metaphysics As a Guide to Morals*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1992, p. 25.

[24] Murdoch, *ibid.*

[25] W. D. Falk, "Hume on Is and Ought" (1995), p. 552.

[26] W. D. Falk *ibid.*.

[27] W. D. Falk (1995), p. 552; emphasis added.

[28] W. D. Falk (1995), p. 552.

[29] For the term "psychological facts", see Larry May, Marilyn Friedman, and Andy Clark (eds.). *Mind and Morals: Essays on Cognitive Science and Ethics*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1996; see their introductory comments, p. 2.

[30] For all the references see David Fate Norton, 1993, p. 153-254.

[31] Norton, 1993, *ibid.*

[32] Norton, 1993, *ibid.*

[33] Norton, 1993, *ibid.*

[34] Richard Cumberland is a better example of Hume's targets. Cumberland, in a search for a scientific foundation of morality, reduced moral objects to observable phenomena that can be rationally discovered as having absolute objective truth. As he maintained, he proposed to "resolve…the Whole of *moral philosophy*... into *natural Observations* known by the experience of all Men, or into Conclusions of true *Natural Philosophy (*Quoted by Darwall, 1985, p. 15). He aimed at establishing the view that "obligations cannot consist in anything other than motives that are unavoidable for agents deliberating rationally (Darwall, 15.). Notice Hume's direct refutation of this view in the *Treatise*. "There has been an opinion very industriously propagated by certain philosophers, that morality is susceptible to demonstration; and tho' no one has ever been able to advance a single step in those demonstrations; yet 'tis taken for granted, that this science may be brought to an equal certainty with geometry or algebra (T. 463).

[35] For the term "Subjective naturalism," see Michael Smith (1995, 27), and D. H. Monro (1967).

[36] Stephen Darwall is the one I know who captures this point. See his *Impartial Reason, ibid.*, Ch. 5, especially pp. 55-56.

[37] John P. Wright. *The Sceptical Realism of David Hume*. Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1983, p. 3. I will simply refer to this book as *"Sceptical Realism."*

[37] Wright, 1995, 349

[38] Wright, *Sceptical Realism*, p. 31.

[39] Wright assembles a support for his claim from a passage he cites from the beginning of Part II of Book I of the *Treatise* regarding Hume's summary view of the conditions of human knowledge. In the passage Hume declares: "Wherever ideas are adequate representations of objects, the relations, contradictions and agreement of ideas are all applicable to the objects; and this we may in general observe to be the foundation of all human knowledge" (T. 29).

[40] Wright introduces the book as follows: "I try to show how skepticism and realism combine to form a unified philosophical system, which, whatever its limitations, presents a coherent and fascinating picture of man and nature and the relations between them" (p. 7).

[41] Wright, p. 3.

[42] In the effort to understand Hume's philosophy, Wright offers us the following advice. "It is important to understand that scepticism is a philosophical attitude which is self-consciously adopted by Hume…Hume's principle allows one to retain a substantial notion of reality in spite of the contrary ideas. We shall see that an essential part of his mitigated or academic skepticism lies in the claim that our ideas are *inadequate* representations of reality. I argue that a central aim of Hume's philosophy of the understanding is to show that we retain commerce with a world of independent objects through a species of *natural judgments* that involve a systematic confusion of ideas. These natural judgments lie at the root of all perception and experience, and cause us to ascribe properties to objects which do not belong to the sense-derived ideas which represent them.... In order to appreciate the nature of Hume's realism we must practice that willing suspension of disbelief which stands at the root of all genuine philosophical understanding" (Wright, pp. 4-5).

[43] Wright, 1995, 349.

[44] *Ibid.*

[45] John P. Wright, "Wayne Waxman's *Hume's Theory of Consciousness.*" *Hume Studies*, vol. XXI, No. 2, 1995, p. 349; The remark is a repetition from his *Sceptical Realism*, p. 88.

[46] David Hume, "Advertisement," in the *Treatise*, see the title page adjacent to the beginning of the third Book: "Of Morals," p. 456; the emphasis is Hume's.

[47] That by "a later philosopher" Hume refers to Hutcheson, see Winkler, p. 14.

[48] See also the 1975 edition of the *Enquiry* by L. A. Selby-Bigge, paragraph 122.

[49] The argument in the *Treatise also runs as follows.* "Take any action allow'd to be vicious…The vice entirely escapes you, as long as you consider the object. You never can find it, till you turn your reflexion into your own breast, and find a sentiment of disapprobation, which arises in you towards this action…It lies in your self, not in the object. So that when you pronounce any action or character to be vicious, you men nothing, but that from the constitution of your nature you have a feeling or sentiment of blame from the contemplation of it. Vice and virtue, therefore, may be compar'd to sounds, colours, heat and cold…And this discovery in morals, like that other in physics, is to be regarded as a considerable advancement of the speculative sciences" (T. 449).

[50]Besides Wright, other Humean moral realists in recent Hume scholarship include David Fate Norton (1982)

[51] John Mackie, *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1977, Chapter 1.

[52] J. L. Mackie, *ibid.*, p. 48-49.

[53] For the measure of truth according to its instrumental or serviceable value, see Robert Nozick, *The Nature of Rationality* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993, chapter three, especially pp. 67-69.

[54] Michael Dummett, Nelson Goodman, Thomas Kuhn, Paul Fayerabend, Hilary Putnam, Richard

Rorty, Jacques Derrida, Humberto Maturana, Francesco Varela, and Terry Winograd are among the thinkers who challenge the naïve belief that reality exists independent of our representations of it. (Searle, CSR, p. 157).

[55] Quoted by Searle, CSR, p. 158. Searle takes the idea from Nelson Goodman, *Of Mind and Other Matters*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984, p. 36.

[56] The upsurge of current technological and communication advancement, as evidenced by the "Internet" and "E-mail" technologies, prove the realist wrong. Progress in science according to different time setting or generations makes it impossible to deny the idea that we are constantly seeking to shape (and we are in fact succeeding) the world according to how *we* want it to be

[57] As we saw in chapters one and two, in developing his naturalistic moral theory, Hume attempt to establish social-moral truths on the model of natural scientific truths. But as I indicated, he did not need to look for a strict parity between scientific systems before he could successfully defend his belief in continuity between the two.

[58] Iris Murdoch (1992), p. 26.

[59] It is not exactly clear the parties involved in the controversy. David Fate Norton (1993) speculates that Hume was probably referring to a debate the persisted "the preceding quarter century" when Hume was writing, the principal players of which included Bernard Mandeville and Francis Hutcheson. But Norton points out that the alleged controversy was well under way a century earlier, and Hume was familiar with the contributions made to it by writers such as Hugo Grotius, Thomas Hobbes, Samuel Pufendorf, and Ralph Cudworth. (See David Fate Norton 1993: 148-149.)

[60] In *David Hume: The Philosophical Works*. T. H. Green and T. H. Grose (eds.), vol. 3. 1963. I will simply refer to this work as "*Taste.*"

[61] I responded to the problem in chapter two. My present concern is restricted to the scientific character of psychological moral facts.

[62] My assumption in the discussion that the natural world in which we live is a factual reality is inspired by David Armstrong's Wittgensteinean naturalistic view that the spacetime system and its content is nothing more than a world of states of affairs or facts. (David M. Armstrong, *A world of States of Affairs*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.) As Wittgenstein declared: "The World is all that is the case. The world is the totality of facts, not of things. What is the case--a fact--is the existence of states of affairs" (*Tractatus*, sections 1, 1.1, and 2.) However, I disagree with Armstrong's consideration of facts of which the world is constituted as mind-independent reality.

[63] In contemporary moral theory, David Brink is a typical realist who advocates that morality is informed by facts that are completely independent of the experiences or psychological states of moral subjects.

[64] The ordinary view that denies the scientific status of psychological moral facts is also supported by the philosophical and scientific traditions that originated from the logical positivists of the early twentieth century. The logical positivists, such as A. J. Ayer, followed the Lockean-Cartesian limited scope of the empirical world and science to a radical conclusion. Committed to their "verification principle", the positivists restricted "genuine" facts to assertions of possible observable statements. These are the only statements that, in their view, literally have cognitive and empirical contents. As we noted earlier, this position led the ethical emotivists among the positivists to denounce ethical judgments as mere expressions of feelings and attitudes that do not state any cognitively meaningful claims. "Ethical concepts," as Ayer argued, "are pseudo-concepts and consequently indefinable." By this Ayer spoke for the emotivists as convinced with the view that moral judgments do not state or describe empirical facts about any state of affairs. As we noted Hume is often associated with the emotivists' view simply because he regarded reasons for moral considerations as psychological facts.

[65] "Advertisement," in the *Treatise* (title page adjacent to page 456).

[66] *Treatise*, 162; Hume's emphasis.

[67] Nicholas Capaldi. *David Hume: The Newtonian Philosopher*. Boston: G. K. Hall & Co. 1975, p. 31.
[68] Corliss Swain, "Hume and Modern Philosophy." Unpublished, p. 1.
[69] Quoted by Swain, ibid, p. 1.
[70] Hume considered the distinction between primary and secondary qualities is akin to the Platonic distinction between appearance and reality which, in the ancient philosophy, was construed as a distinction between "substantial forms and occult qualities" (i.e. substantive versus accidental or contingent qualities) (T. 226).
[71] I must call to attention that Hume's argument is ambiguous. His account could be misleadingly conceived as an ontological argument that denies mind-independent existence of physical bodies (or objects). But as remarked in the question that prompted the double-existence discussion, Hume was concerned with the epistemic problem regarding the warranted basis of our belief in the real existence of matter. Regarding the ontological question about existence, Hume remarked in the beginning of the discussion that "that is a pint that we must take for granted in all our reasonings." (T.187).
[72] Immediately after placing secondary qualities on the same footing as primary qualities, the passage that I quoted earlier in the text, consider in the following passage Hume's remark in reference to the modern philosophers, such as Descartes and Locke. "So strong is the prejudice for the distinct continu'd existence of the former qualities [i.e., colours, sounds, heat and cold], that when the contrary opinion is advanc'd by modern philosophers, people imagine they can almost refute it from their feeling and experience, and that their very senses contradict this philosophy" (T. 192).
[73] This is the opening argument of Section II, Part IV, Book I of the *Treatise* entitled "Of skepticism with regard to the senses."
[74] It must be clarified that Hume's rejection of the primary-secondary qualities dualism was not a claim that there is no such a distinction. His objection applies rejection of the objective reality of the latter. Also, his objection was not a reduction of secondary qualities to primary qualities. In other words, his defense of the objective reality of secondary properties on the same ontological and epistemic status as primary qualities was not a reduction of the former to the latter. They are different qualities but both are objectively real, ontologically and epistemically: both have an objective existence in reality (in a constructive or projective sense) and that both are objectively knowable.
[75] Terence Penelhum. "Hume's Moral Psychology," in David Fate Norton (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Hume*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 121.
[76] John Mackie (1977) coined the label; Simon Blackburn (1993) adopted it, when developing his "quasi-realism.
[77]. ..See particularly, his discussion in the *Treatise*, pp. 167ff.
[78]. This naturalistic view of the mind somewhat anticipated contemporary naturalistic account in philosophy of mind which construes our psychological experiences as a biological feature inherited from our evolutionary traits. On this, I am particularly referring to John Searle's "biological naturalism." He argues from neurobiological perspective to defend the view that biological creatures, such as us, possess subjective intentional states, such as beliefs, desires, and perceptions, which, by nature, ought to be regarded as evolved biological phenomena and therefore naturalistically explicable. (See John R. Searle. *The Construction of Social Reality*. New York: The Free Press, 1995; p. 6.)
[79]. Stroud, p. 13. Hume was not unaware that his departure from, and attempt to correct and scientifically methodize our ordinary view of facts, was controversial. He remarked about his psychological projectionism: "I am much afraid, that tho' the foregoing reasoning appears to me the shortest and most decisive imaginable; yet with the generality of readers the bias of the mind will prevail and give them a prejudice against the present doctrine…But tho' this be the only

reasonable account we can give of necessity, the contrary notion is so riveted in the mind from the principles above-mention'd, that I doubt not but my sentiments will be treated by many as extravagant and ridiculous. What! The efficacies of causes lie in the determination of the mind! As if causes did not operate entirely independent of the mind and would not continue to their operation, even tho' there was no mind existent to contemplate them, or reason concerning them. Thought may well depend on causes for its operation, but not causes on thought. This is to reverse the order of nature, and make that secondary, which is really primary" (T167).

[80] *Treatise* p. 468; emphasis supplied.

[81] *Treatise*, 471.

[82] ..Considerations of the environmental ethical implication of Hume's position go beyond the scope of my interest in this paper.

[83] Iris Murdoch (1970), p. 78.

[84] For Frankena's and Searle's argument see, W. D. Hudson (1969) *op. cit.*

Chapter 7

[1] As Israel Scheffler maintains, "that the ideal of objectivity has been fundamental to science is beyond question." According to his argument, "A fundamental feature of science is its ideal of objectivity, an ideal that subjects all scientific statements to the test of independent and impartial criteria, recognizing no authority of persons in the realm of cognition" (Israel Scheffler, *Science and Subjectivity*. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merril company, Inc., 1967; p. v, 1.)

[2] I will use the concept "intentionality" comprehensively to include conscious psychological states, such as beliefs, desires, motives and intentions.

[3] The social community in which I ground the Humean convention theory of collective agreement and cooperative moral behavior applies to non-ideological groups or society. I rather have in mind a complex humane social-moral community whose practices fall within the paradigm of non-violent moral practices that is approvable by the universal laws of human nature, such as the conventions of the United Nations.

[4] Charles Taylor, "Atomism" in his *Philosophy and the Human Sciences: Philosophical Papers 2*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, p. 189; my emphasis.

[5] On these arguments, I am following Nicholas Capaldi (1989: pp. 21ff) closely.

[6] Capaldi (1989), p. 22.

[7] As Descartes once argued, "by knowing the force and the action of fire, water, air, the stars, the heavens, and other bodies that surround us, we should be able to utilize them for all uses to which they are suited and thus render ourselves *masters and possessors of nature."(* Capaldi 1989, p. 22).

[8] Capaldi (1989), p. 21ff. See especially his diagram in p. 22.

[9] Capaldi (1989), pp. 21ff; cf. 308.

[10] Capaldi (1989), p. 22.

[11] See p. 22.

[12] Capaldi, p. 23.

[13] Capaldi (1989), p. 23.

[14] Capaldi, p. 23.

[15] Capaldi, p. 23.

[16] Capaldi, (1989), p. 25.

[17] Capaldi, p. 23.

[18] Some commentators, for example, Terence Penelhum (1995) understand Hume as denying the idea of the self. But they are wrong, as Nicholas Capaldi (1995) strongly argues. Hume denied the Cartesian atomistic conception of the self but defended the self as a sociable concept.

[19] Commenting on this passage, Nicholas Capaldi insightfully captures the idea that "action is a fundamental category of Hume's analysis" of the self. (See his "The Historical and Philosophical

Significance of Hume's theory of the Self," in Stanley Tweyman (ed.). *David Hume: Critical Assessments.* Vol. III, (1995), p. 629.

[20] Capaldi, *ibid*, 629.

[21] Hume believed that a third person knowledge of the self is possible. He claimed that others can know the self by the same manner (process) that the self forms knowledge of itself through its successive activities and experiences. Other persons can know and relate to me by the same way that I can know myself as a person and relate or respond to my own activities. As Capaldi puts it, on Hume's thought, "since the self can know itself as an object, the *self can respond to its own activity just as others respond to its activity.*" (Capaldi, *ibid*, p. 635, emphasis in the original text.)

[22]Capaldi, 637.

[23] "This characteristic of self-awareness" in the social context is, as Capaldi argues, "exactly what Hume stresses in his discussion of the self, and it is well the foundation of Hume's theory of sympathy and morality" (Capaldi, p. 635).

[24] Charles Taylor (1994), p. 198.

[25] Taylor, *ibid.* 197-198.

[26] John Searle (1995), p. 23.

[27] Searle, *ibid.*

[28] Searle, *ibid.*

[29] Jean Hampton (1997), p. 89.

[30] Hampton, *ibid.*

[31] Robert M. Gordon, "Sympathy, Simulation, and the Impartial Spectator," in Larry May, Marilyn Friedman, and Andy Clark (eds.). *Mind and Morals: Essays on Cognitive Science and Ethics*. Cambridge: The MIT Press 1996, p. 165.

[32] Gordon, p. 165.

[33] Gordon, 165-166.

[34] David Hume, "Of National Characters," in *David Hume: The Philosophical Works,* Vol. 3. Thomas Hill Green and Thomas Hodge Grose (eds.). London: Scientia Verlag Aalen, 1964; p. 248.

[35] John Searle (1995), p. 23.

[36] Searle (1995), 129; my emphasis.

[37] Searle defines capacities for collective intentionality in the following way. "By capacities I mean abilities, dispositions, tendencies, and causal *structures generally*. It is important to see that when we talk about the Background, we are talking about a certain category of neurophysiological causation" (pp. 127-29).

[38] Searle (1995), 129; my emphasis.

[39] Pall Ardal reminds us that Hume is saying more than that "the conventions he refers to are necessary to secure for people the enjoyment of their property, or to make people keep their promises or use language successfully." Instead, Ardal thinks Hume "is making the more radical claim that without conventions there would be no property, no promises and no language (p. 71).

[40] Three accounts of the process by which collective agreement is formed can be identified (a) Social contract theory which sees collective agreement as an instrument by which individual social actors promise one another to live by mutually adopted rules. Hobbes, Locke and Rawls are examples here. (b) Biological theory that believes that we have an innate biological We-intentionality ingrained on our minds for realizing cooperative behaviour. John Searle is an example. (c) Conventionalist who does not believe in any of the first two but instead sees collective agreement as a non-contractual social institution that evolves invisibly by a gradual process of human association. This is the view that Hume defended.

[41] Gauthier (1979), 24.

[42] Gauthier (1979), 24.

[43] As David Lewis argues in his *Convention: A Philosophical Study*, "it is a platitude that

language is ruled by convention. Words might be used to mean almost anything; and we who use them have made them mean what they do because somehow, gradually and informally, we have come to an understanding that this is what we shall use them to mean." (David K. Lewis. *Convention: A Philosophical Study*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969, p. 1.)

[44] My expression here seems an existentialist language. I believe elements of existentialism can be reconstructed from Hume, but I do not at the present want to suggest that Hume is a proto-existentialist.

[45] Hampton (1997), 91.

[46] Hampton (1997), 91.

[47] Consider the common character between the amoralist and the sensible knave in the following way. An amoralist is a moral sceptic who accepts the existence of moral reasons and believes that there are overriding moral rules, and yet he questions why we should care about morality (Brink, 46). Compare her to Hume's sensible knave who also reasons in the following way. "I fully recognize the advantage both for the public and for myself of a set of rules in force in one's community and of general conformity therein to them. But why should I follow them in every case, rather than follow them only when it is in my interest to do so?" (G. J. Postema 1995: 112). The difference between them is a matter of the degree of their skepticism. The amoralist questions why she has to follow moral rules *at all* but the sensible knave follows moral rules only that he questions the rationality of following it categorically, whilst he can benefit by not following it in case-by-case circumstances.

[48] For discussions of the knavery problem, see David Gauthier, "Artificial Virtues and the Sensible Knave;" Annette C. Baier, "Artificial Virtues and the Equally Sensible Non-Knaves: A Response to Gauthier." Both papers are printed in *Hume Studies* 18: 2 (1992). See also the paper by G. J. Postema, "Hume's Reply to the Sensible Knave," in Stanley Tweyman (1995), Vol. VI, (1995).

[49] Postema (1995), p. 110.

[50] Analyzing the passage G. J. Postema argues that the knavery challenge cuts deep into the heart of Hume's moral theory. According to his claim, "strictly speaking, Hume's knave does not challenge the rationality of all morality, but only the rationality of compliance with the rules and conventions of justice.... And this challenge strikes at the heart of Hume's project." (G. J. Postema 1995:110.)

[51] Postema (1995), p. 110.

[52] Robert Nozick, "Rational Belief" in his *The Nature of Rationality*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993, especially p. 65.

[53] Nozick (1993), p. 65.

[54] Pal Ardal 1995, 70.

[55] David Lewis (1969), 33.

[56] I am following W. C. Charron closely about my discussion of the first two features of Hume's concept of convention. See his "Convention, Games of Strategy, and Hume's Philosophy of Law and Government," in Stanley Tweyman, Vol. VI, 1995.

[57] For the requirements of mutual responsiveness and commitment to joint effort by Shared cooperative activity, see Michael E. Bratman, "Shared Cooperative Activity." *The Philosophical Review*, vol. 101, No. 2 (April 1992), p. 328.

[58]Gauthier's account involves an attempt to reject Hume's non-contractarian theory of conventional agreement. His argument is that Hume failed to recognize the view that contractarianism is a species of the normative conventionalism that Hume attractively espoused. In his paper "David Hume, Contractarian," Gauthier explained: "My interpretation will not contradict Hume's actual anti-contractarian avowals. I shall argue that he rejects--and for good reason--that understanding of contractarianism dominant in the Whig opinions of his time. But that rejection is inconclusive if there are, as I shall try to show, other and deeper, ways of

developing a contractarian position.... Contractarianism is a species of conventionalism..." (Gauthier 1979), 3.

[59]Gauthier (1979), 6.

[60] Gauthier (1979), 6. He refers to David Lewis (1969), especially, pp. 42, 78.

[61] Lewis quotes Hume's definition of convention in the *Treatise* (Book III. I.II., p. 490) to support the idea that his analysis of convention "is a theory along the lines of Hume's discussion of the origin of justice and property" (Lewis, pp. 3-4).

[62] Lewis, p. 99.

[63] Lewis, p. 99.

[64] As I indicated in chapter one, for the purpose of the discussion in the thesis, I use the concepts of "law" and "principle" univocally to imply the same idea.

[65] The debate goes back in the classical era to Plato and Aristotle's arguments regarding the issue of what should be the central focus of philosophizing about morality. For recent discussion of the issue, see Alisdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (1981); Edmund L. Pincoffs, *Quandaries and Virtues* (1986); J. B. Schneewind, "The Misfortune of Virtue" (1997); David Braybrooke, ""No Rules without Virtues; No Virtues without Rules" (1998); Iris Murdoch, *The Sovereignty of Good* (1971); Christina Hoff Sommers *Vice and Virtue in Everyday Life* (1985); Greg Pence, "Virtue Theory" (1991); Robert B. Louden, "On Some Vices of Virtue Ethics" (1984).

[66] J. B. Schneewind, "The Misfortune of Virtue" (1997), p. 179.

[67] Schneewind, p. 179.

[68] Leslie Stephen, *The Science of Ethics*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1882, pp. 155, 158.

[69] William K. Frankena, *Ethics*, Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963, p. 49.

[70] Frankena, p. 53.

[71] Frankena, *ibid.*

[72] Frankena, *ibid.*

[73] Frankena, *ibid.*

[74] Frankena, p. 50.

[75] Frankena, *ibid.*

[76] Perfect duties are precisely defined obligations that involve a fixed criterion of proper conduct. An example is the duty not to steal. By contrast, imperfect duties, such as the duty to be charitable, are not fixed but are flexible and open to specific situations and circumstances. For the distinction, see James Fieser (ed.), *Metaethics, Normative Ethics, and Applied Ethics: Historical and Contemporary Readings*. Belmont: Wadsworth, 2000, see his introductory comments, p. 142.

[77] Whatever the debate was among the natural lawyers is not an issue of my present concern. Also, whether or not Hume formulated his distinction between natural and artificial virtues to account for the alleged concepts of "perfect" and "imperfect" virtues (whatever they mean) is not a subject of my present concern.

[78] Schneewind, p. 187.

[79]In reference to Hume's lists of the artificial virtues (such as justice and fidelity to promises) and the natural virtues (such as friendship and generosity), Schneewind maintains: "these lists make it evident that Hume's artificial virtues, like perfect duties, cover the domain of clear and definite claims which may be enforced by law" (Schneewind, 187).

[80] In reference to his lists of natural virtues, Hume declared: "Meekness, beneficence, charity, generosity, clemency, moderation, equity, bear the greatest figure among the moral qualities and are commonly denominated the *social* virtues, to mark their tendency to the good of society" (T. 578). He considered justice, a typical example of his concept of artificial virtues, as also social in the sense that it is grounded in social convention.

[81] Certainly, Hume believed that moral behavior is enforced by obedience to the government. But it must be noted that, in Hume, government is nothing but rule-governed institutional authority established by conventional agreement. As David Gauthier argues, "For Hume, a theory of

property and justice explicates the rationale for systems of rules determining possession and use.... Government is determined by a system of rules for the enforcement of justice, that is, for Hume, rules for the enforcement of the system of rules governing the possession and use of objects. And obedience is the virtue determined by the system of government, so that obedient behavior consists in adherence to the rules for the enforcement of the system of property. For Hume, a theory of government and obedience explicates the rationale for systems of rules for the enforcement of rules which determine possession and use." (David Gauthier, "David Hume, Contractarian." *The Philosophical Review* 1979, p. 5.)

[82] Raimo Tuomela and Kaarlo Miller suggest a stronger view that the idea of group or we-intentions actually does not make sense without the internalization of we-consciousness. They argue: "In spite of its generality and vagueness, this idea about the internalization of the notion of group in its members is central. It gives us our first reason for the introduction of we-intentions." (See their paper, "We-Intentions." *Philosophical Studies* **53** (1988), p. 367.)

[83] As I quoted earlier in the text, Consider Hume's argument. "The distinction, therefore, between these species of sentiments [of humanity and self-love] being so great and evident, language must soon be moulded upon it, and must invent a particular set of terms, in order to express those universal sentiments of censure or approbation, which arise from humanity, or from views of general usefulness and its contrary. Virtue and vice become then known; morals are recognized; certain general ideas are framed of human conduct and behaviour; such measures are expected from men in such situations. This action is determine'd to be conformable to our abstract rule; than other contrary. And by such universal principles are the particular sentiments of self-love frequently controlled and limited" (E. 274).

[84] Searle 1995, p. 24.

[85] Searle, *ibid.*

[86] Searle, *ibid.*

[87] Searle, *ibid.* I have numbered the arguments into alphabetical categories for the purpose of analysis.

[88] Searle, 24.

[89] Searle, 26.

[90] See p. 26 for two pictures that Searle uses to contrast his account with the traditional one.

[91] Hampton (1997), p. 90.

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